Flowers of the Needle, Volume V

Vavassaro, Giovanni Andrea
Opera Noua Universali,
1546

A Garden of Delightful Designs for Needlework, Gathered from the Most August and Ancient Books Writ upon The *Excellency of the Needle;* with which You may Devise and Work Most Beautiful and Glorious Works in Various Kinds of Embroidery, which shall bear Witness to Your Industry and Skill.

Compiled and Annotated by
Mistress Kathryn Goodwyn, OL
(C. Kathryn Newell)
And Newly Reissued In this Form in 2012

INTRODUCTION

The title of Vavassore's 1546 work "*Opera Noua Universal*…" translates to "A New Universal Work…" The word "Crown" is used in the rest of the title, and there is a charted crown motif at the start of the title. The rest of his run-on introduction is addressed first to young women, and explains that the patterns can be used for various articles of clothing, and for home furnishings. He adds that the patterns also can be of use to painters, calligraphers, etc. The publishing information states that this book was printed in Venice by Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, called Guadagnino.

The collection starts with more of the unique patterns previously seen in Zoppino's "*Gli Universali*…" of 1537. These charted patterns which employ a solid dot in a square to denote a stitch. Some of them have been recharted by Countess Ianthé D'Averoigne, O.L. (Kim Brody Salazar) in her book, "*The New Carolingian Modelbook.*

There follow some double running patterns, mostly geometric in nature, and along with some linear (i.e., "free-form") patterns for embroidery. There is one double running pattern of birds. This is the first time in this series that a double running pattern has been shown for a figural motif rather than the usual geometric repeats. There are a few more patterns for double running designs in this book. One shows a foliate pattern of a vine, one and another one is of rabbits.

This book contains a pattern that is uniquely whimsical and playful. I call it the "Silly Sea Serpents". I found this pattern so unusual and charming that I embroidered a dresser scarf with this motif. (See scan, right).

Vavassore's book ends with a rather fussy alphabet. The letters seem to be

formed of twisted cords and contain many curlicues. One of the text pages of Tagliente's book *Esemplario Nouva…* mentions antique capital letters and French ones. This alphabet may be an example of a "French one".

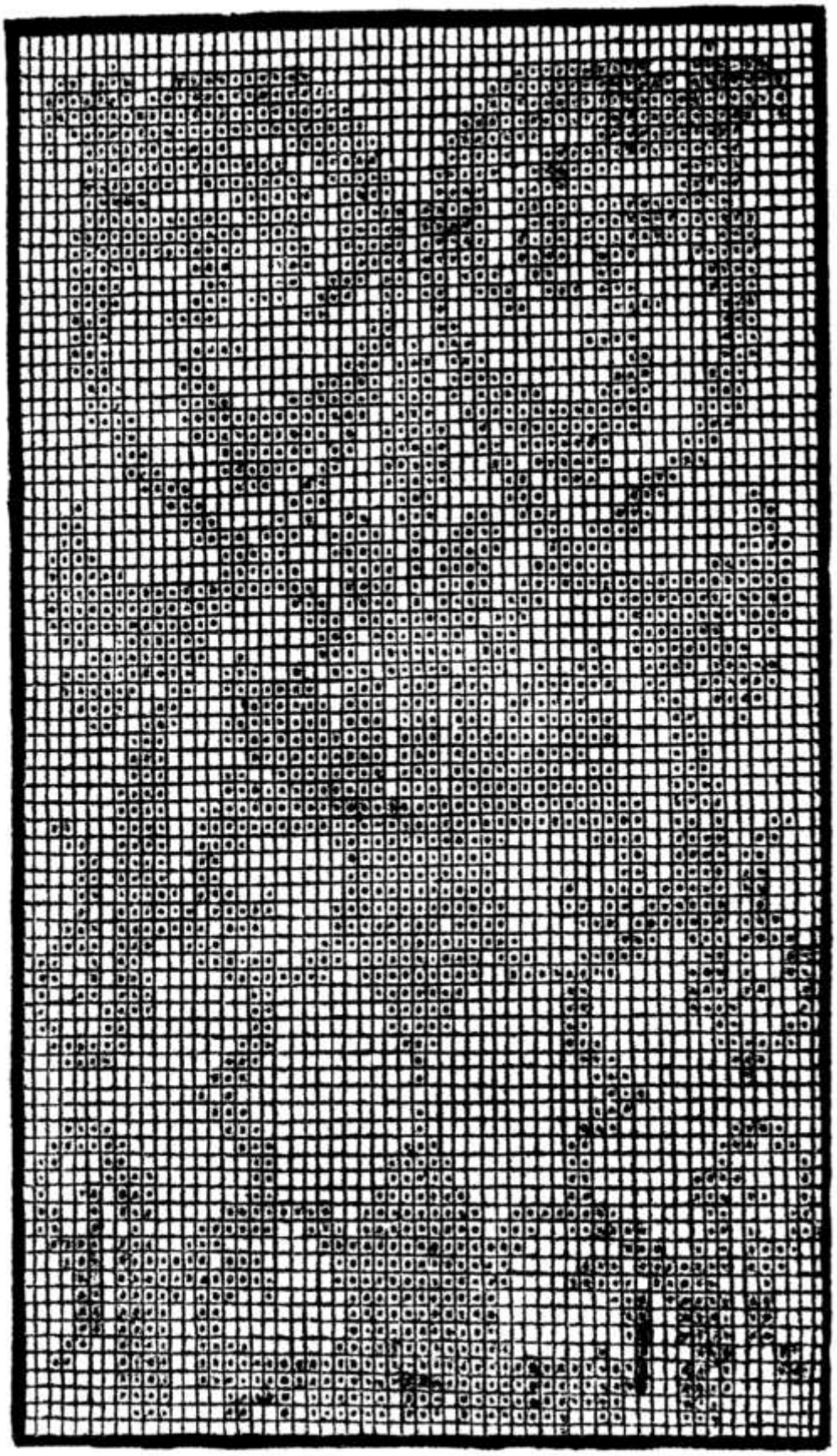
The very last pattern is of a dog chasing a rabbit. The start of a repeat is shown, so it may have been designed with a border in mind. The caption indicating the end of the book is cleverly worked into the bottom right of the design.

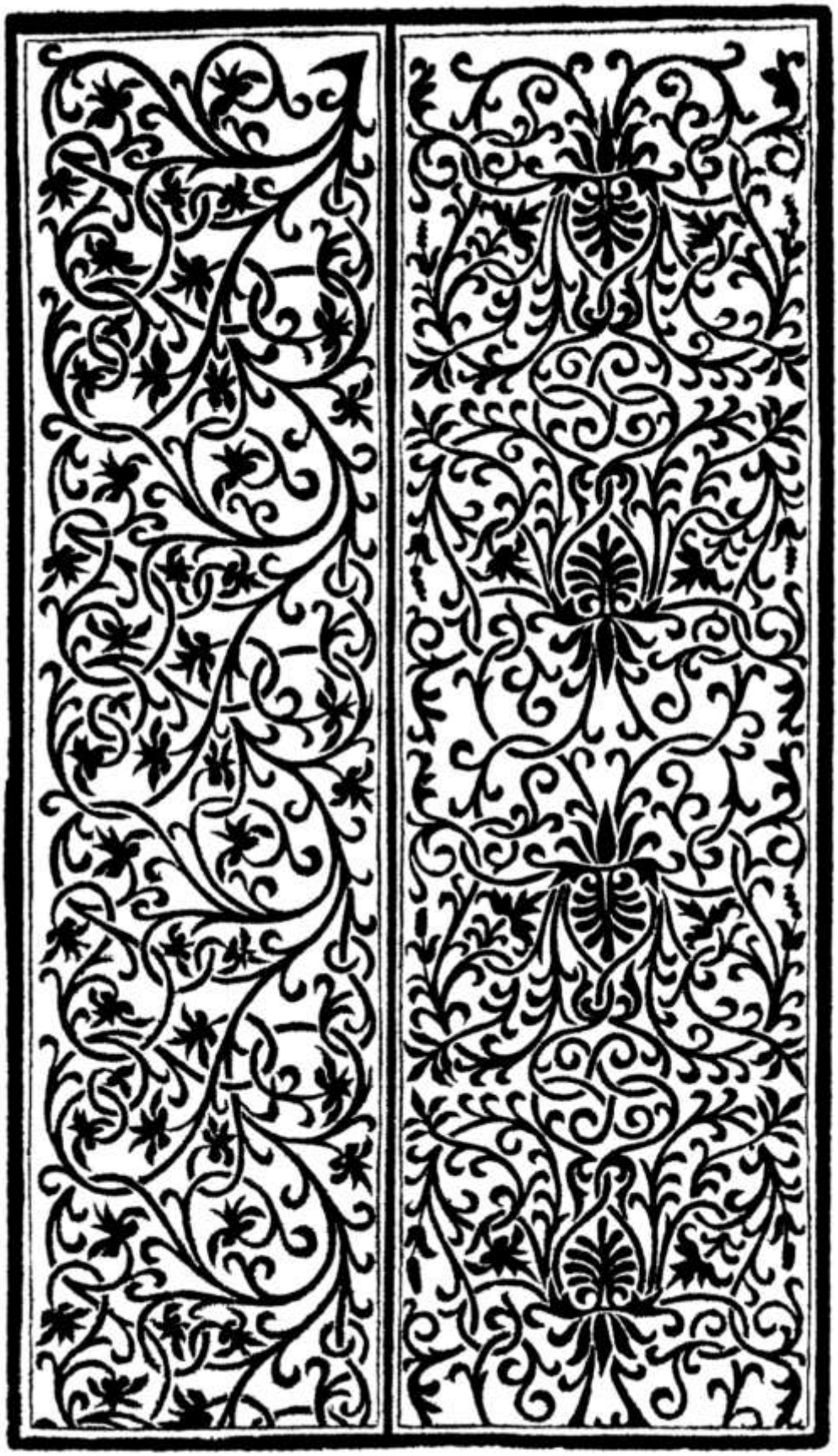
-Kathryn Goodwyn, 2011

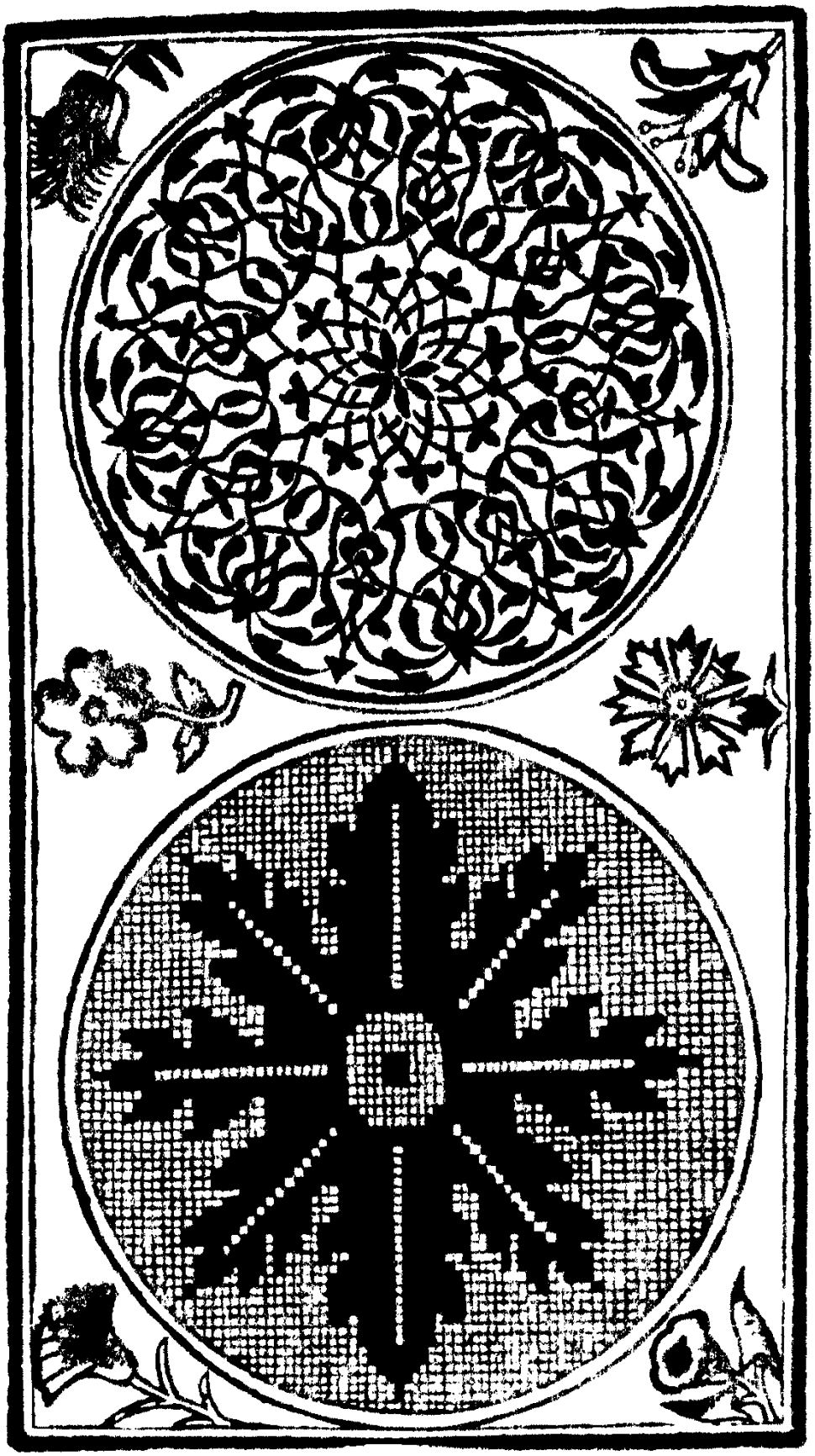
Opera Noua Uniuersal intitulata corona di racammi: Doue le venerande donne & fanciulle: trouarãno di varie opere p fare colari di camisiola: & torniãenti di letti ẽtemelle di cuscini boccasini: scbufioni: cordlli di piu sorte: Et molte opere p reccãmatori: & p dipitore & portuesi: de le quale opere o vero esempli ciascuno le potra pore in opera secõdo el suo bisogno: Con gratia:

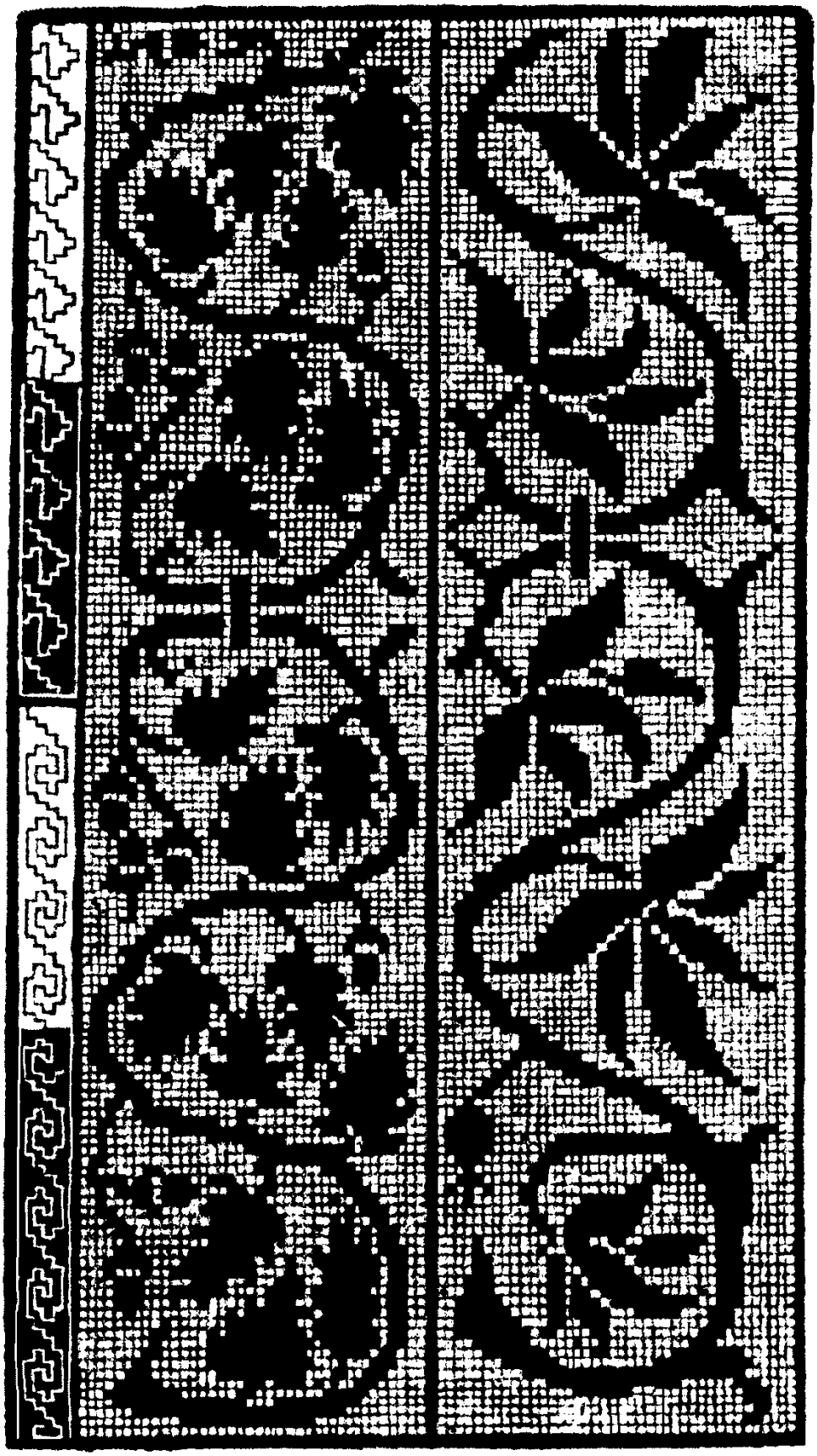
Nouamente Stampata ne la inclita citta di vineggia per Giouanni andrea Vauassore detto guadagnio

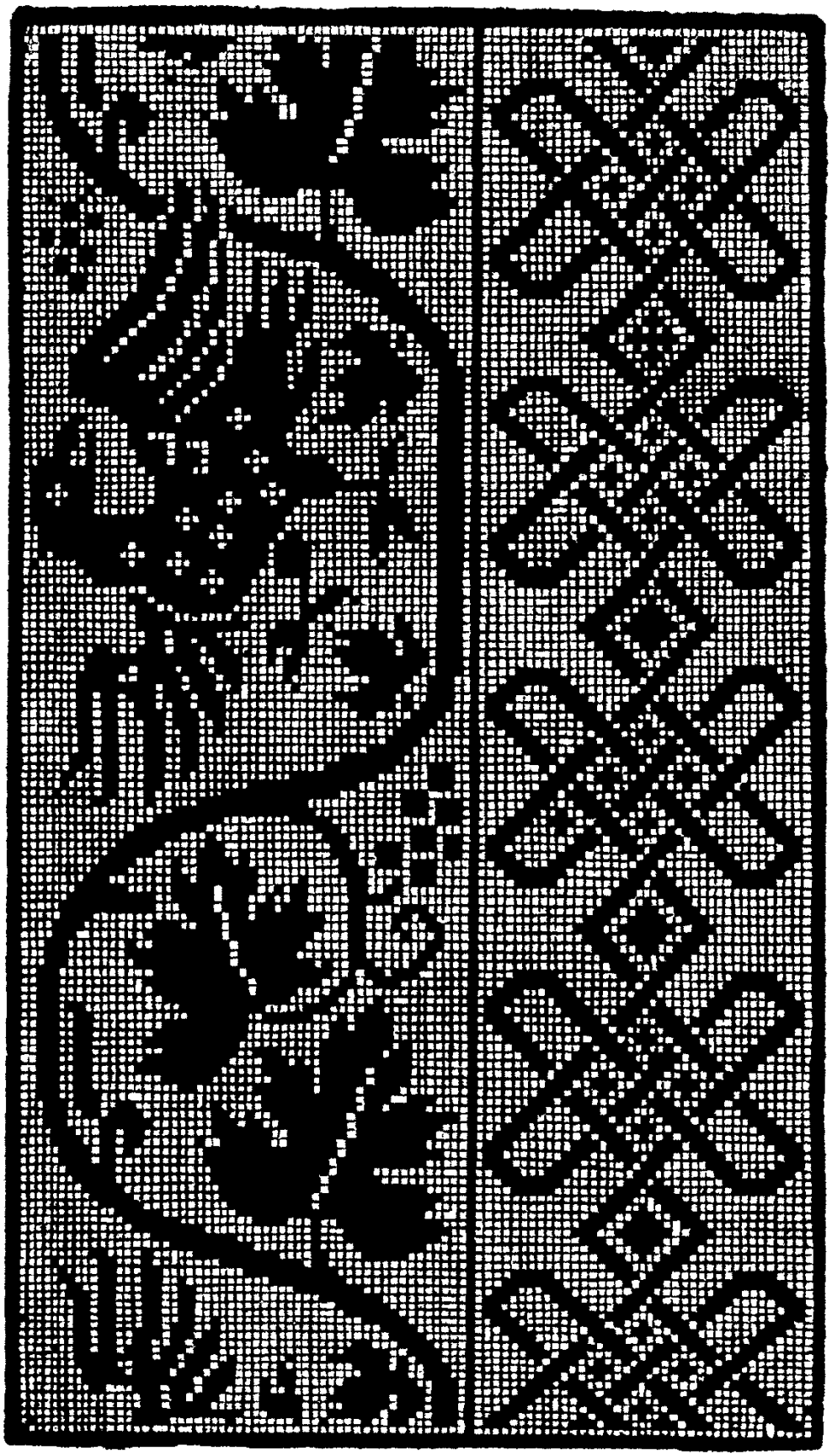
Vavassaro, Giovanni Andrea *Opera Nova Universali, 1546*

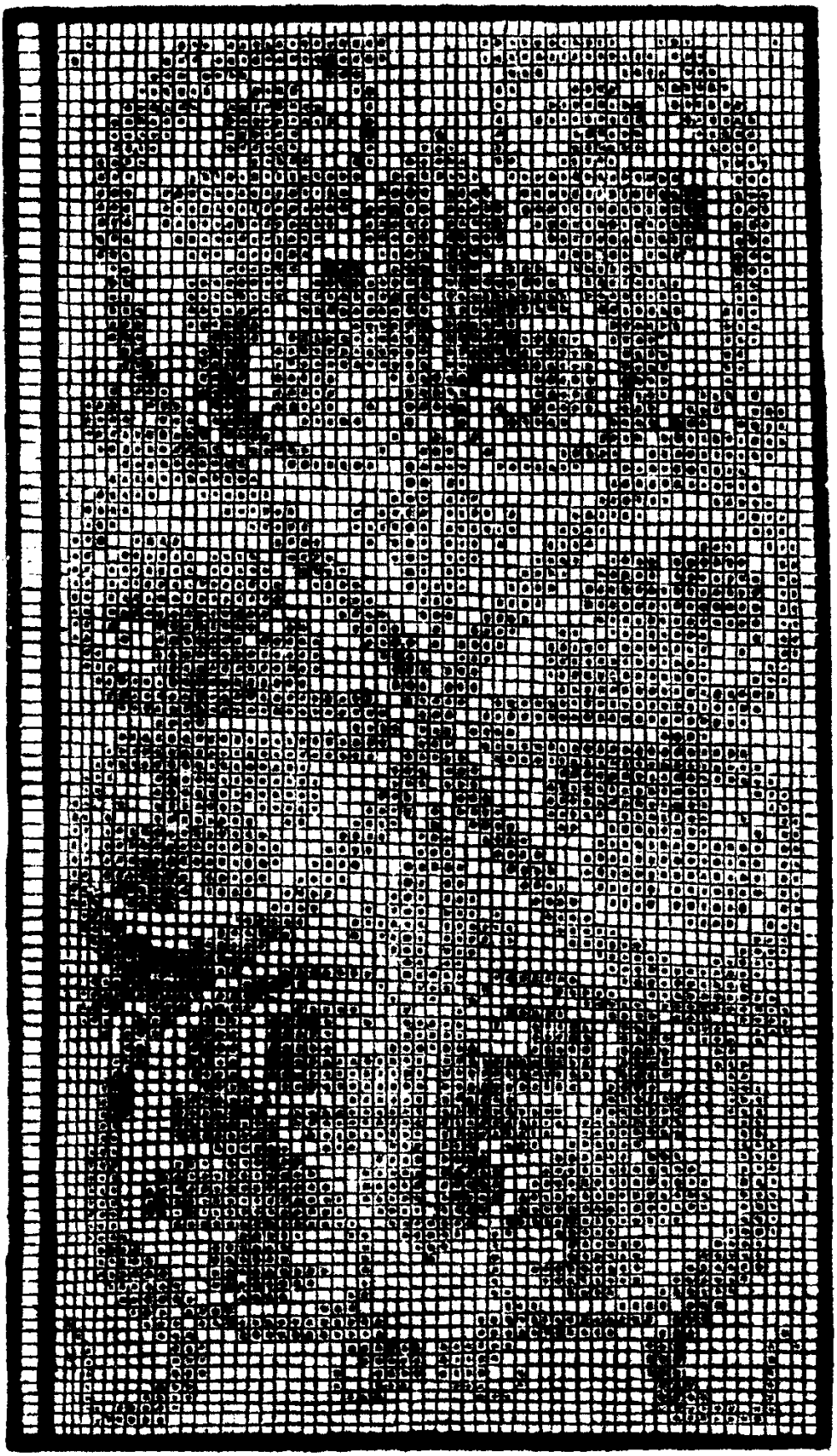


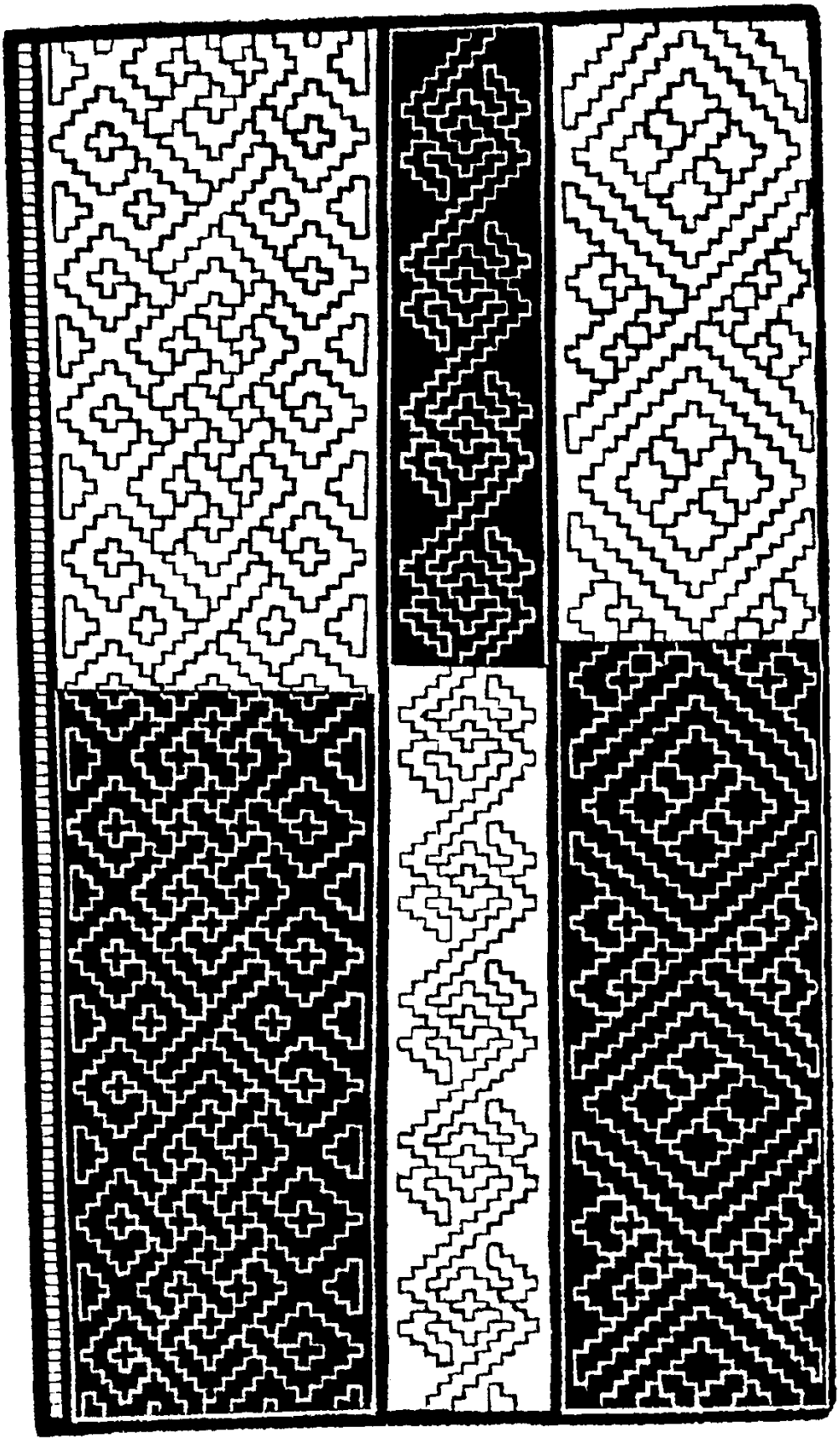


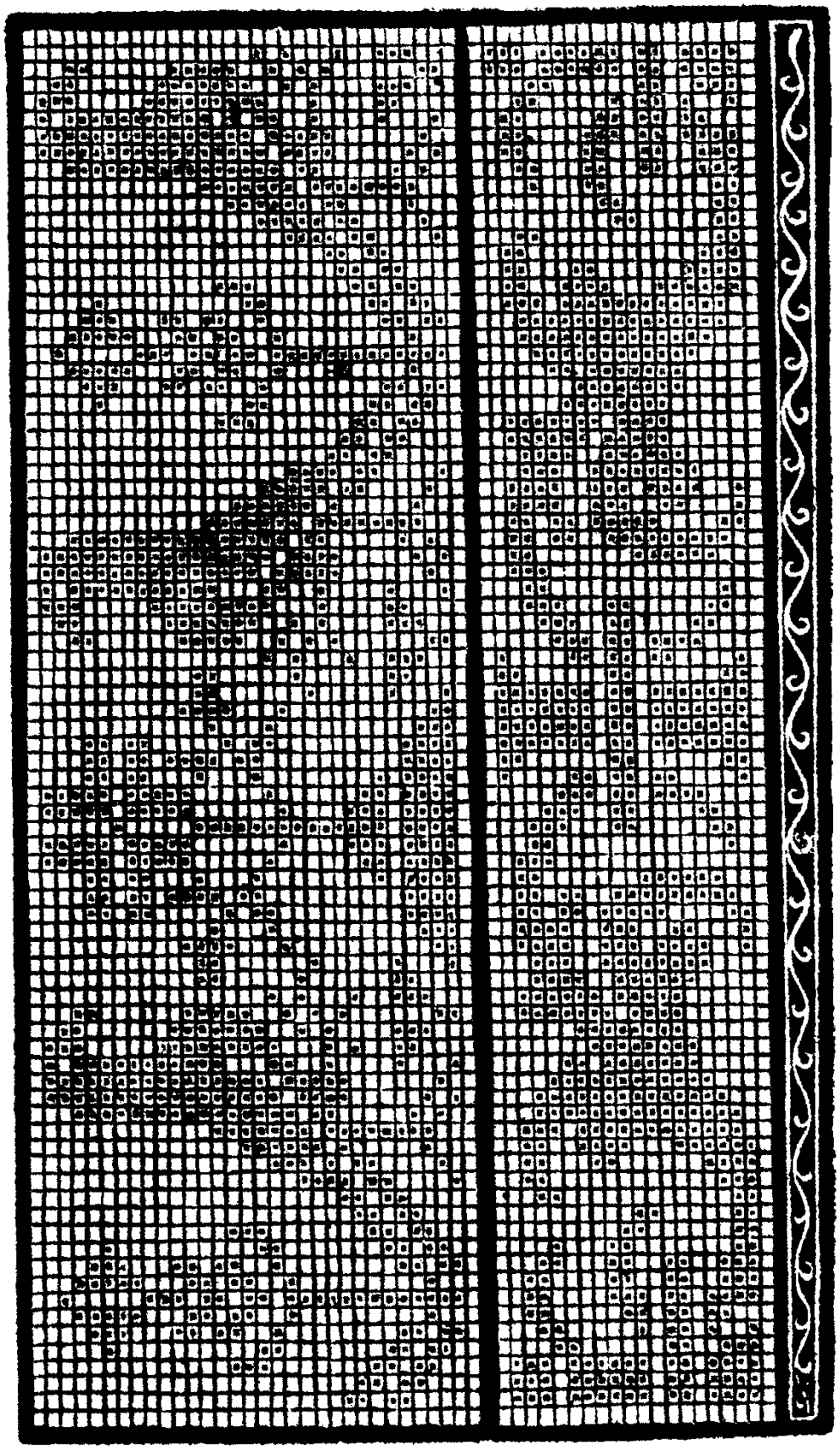


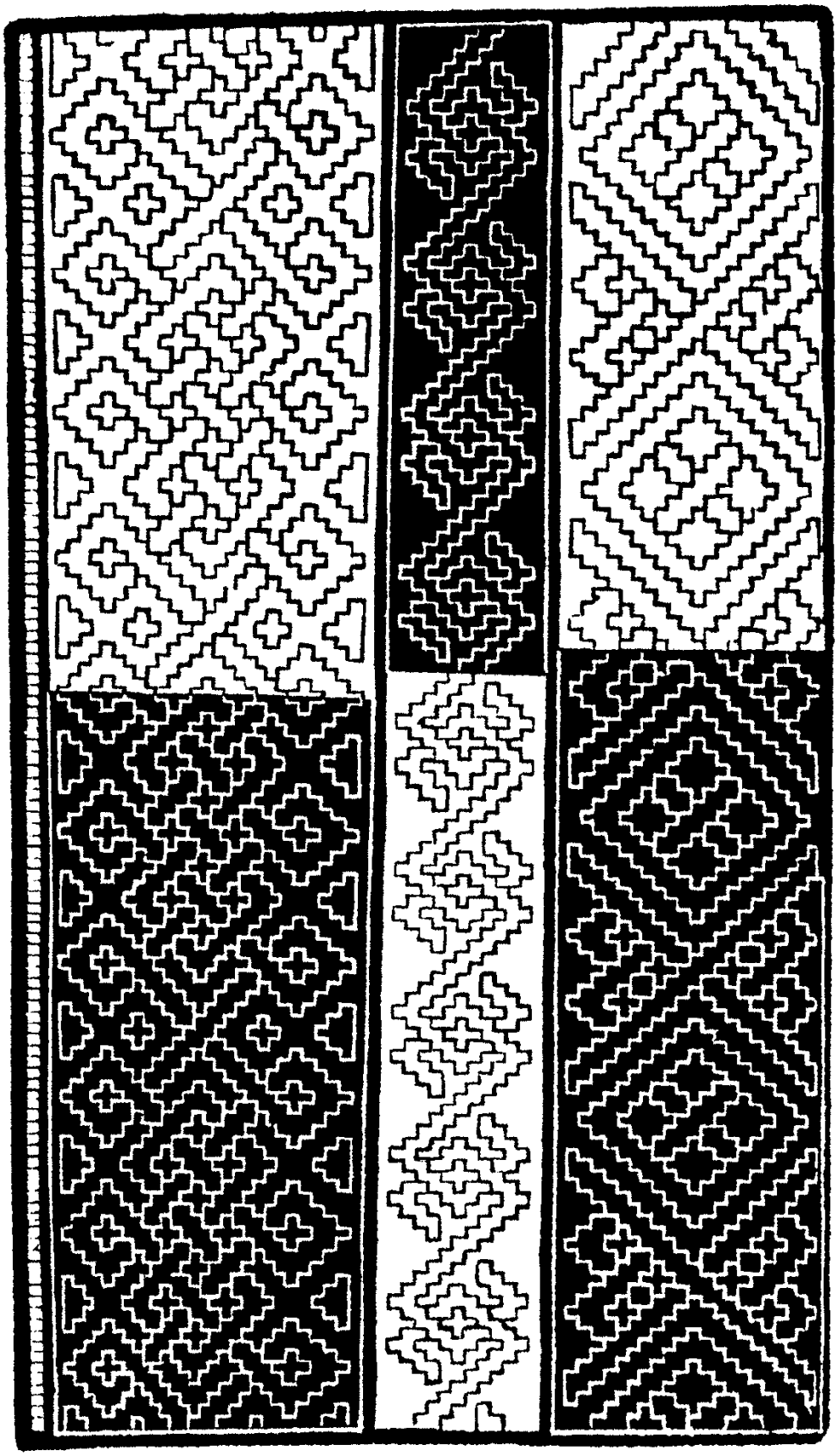


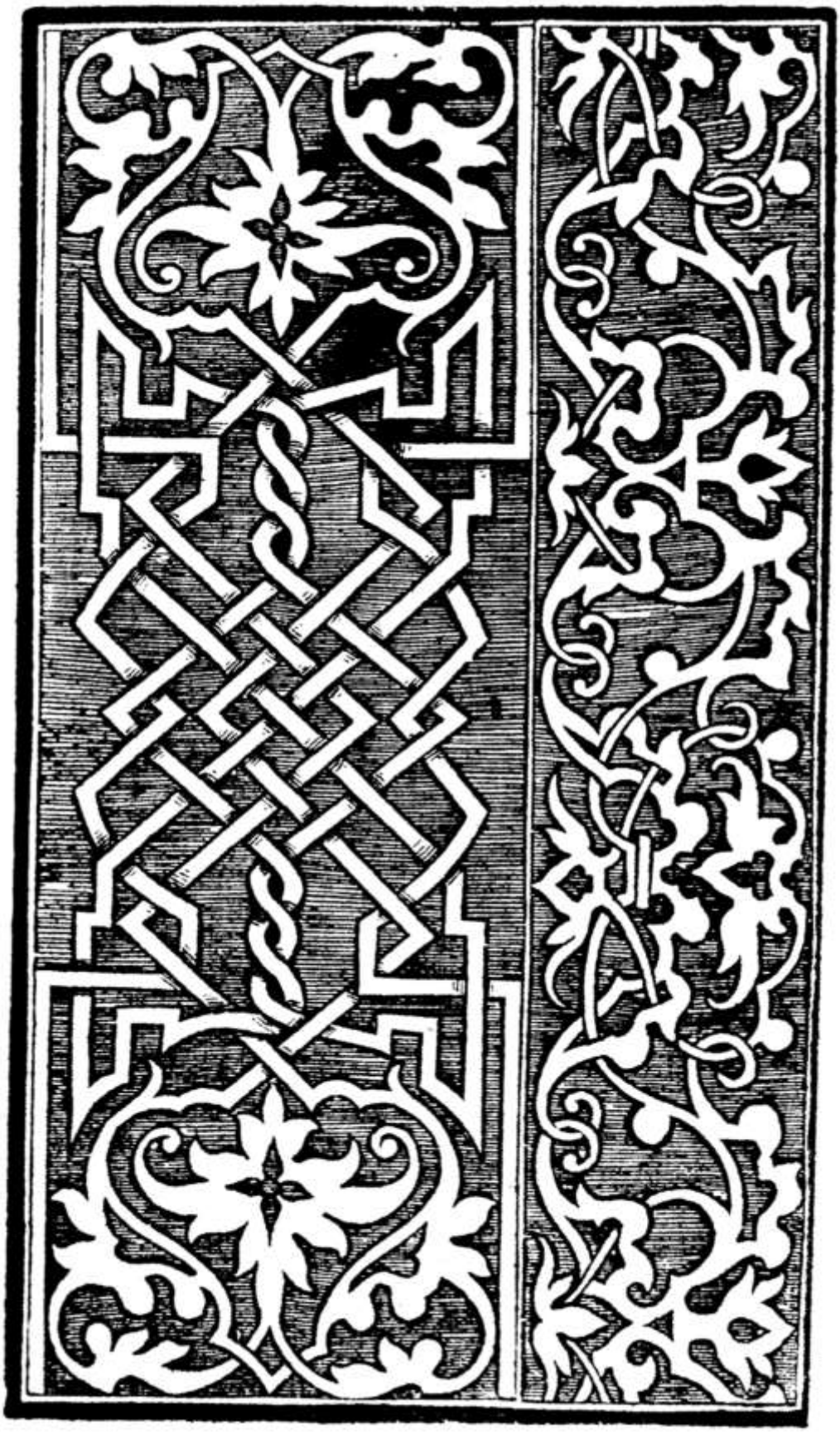


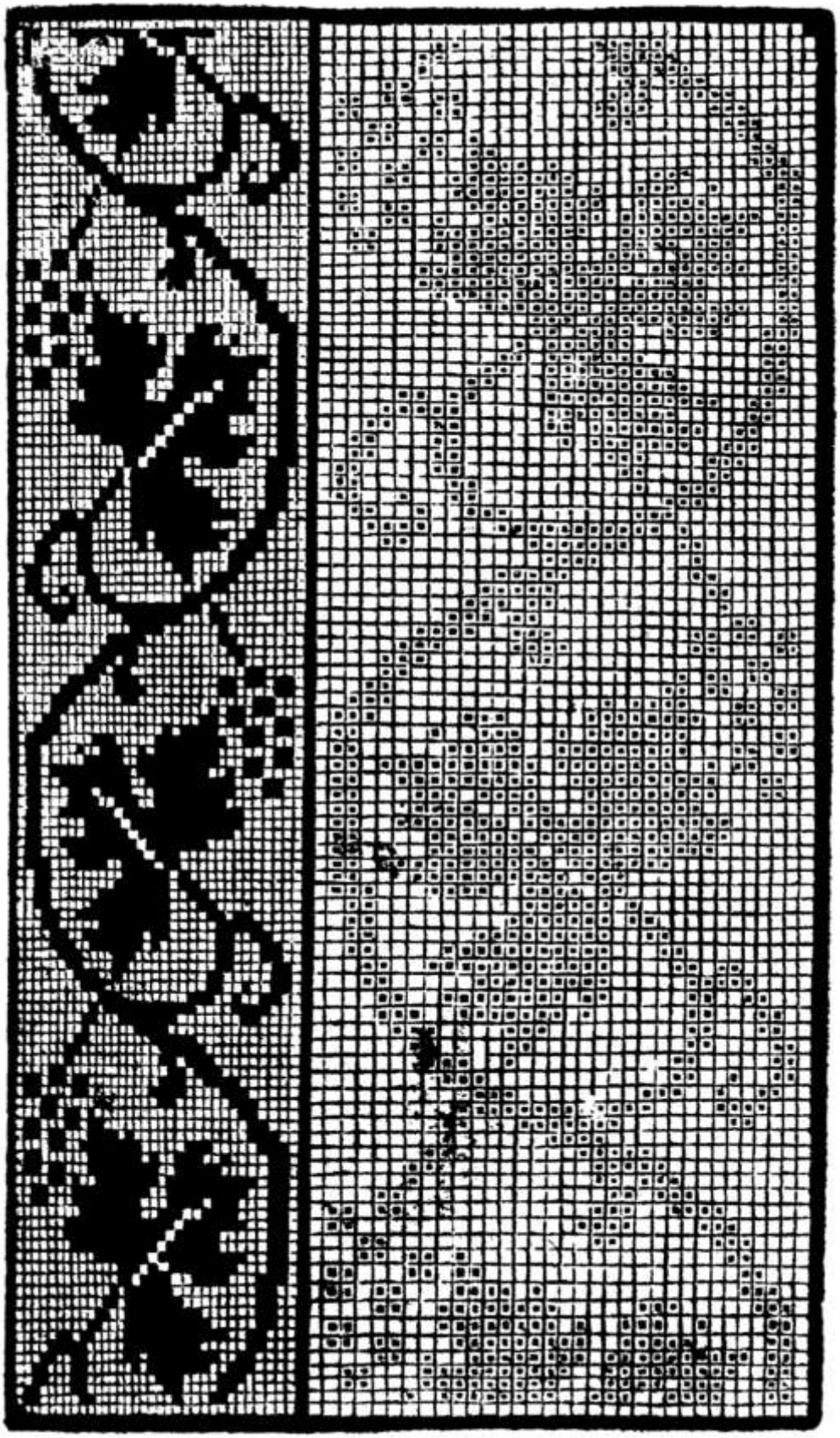


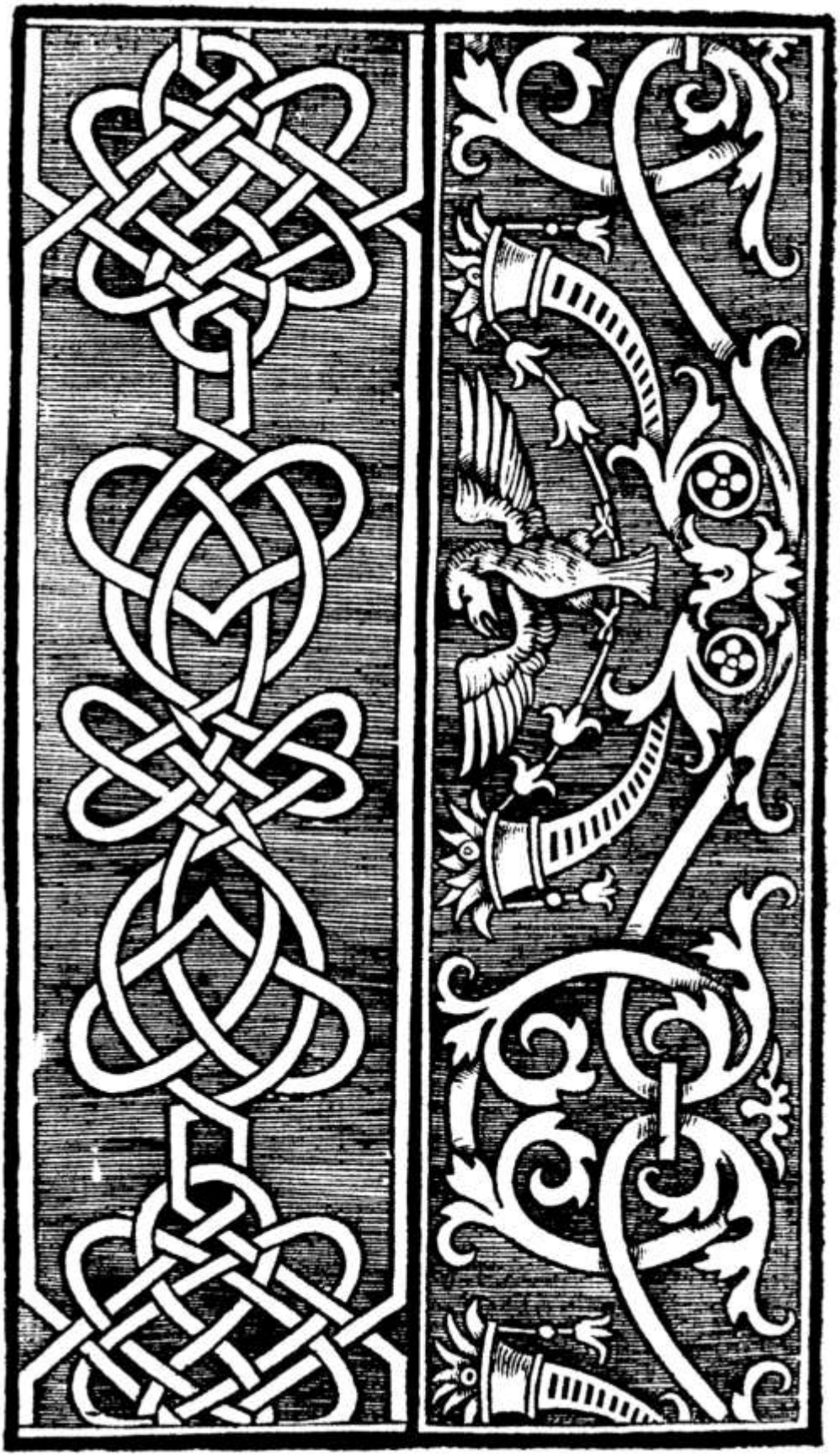


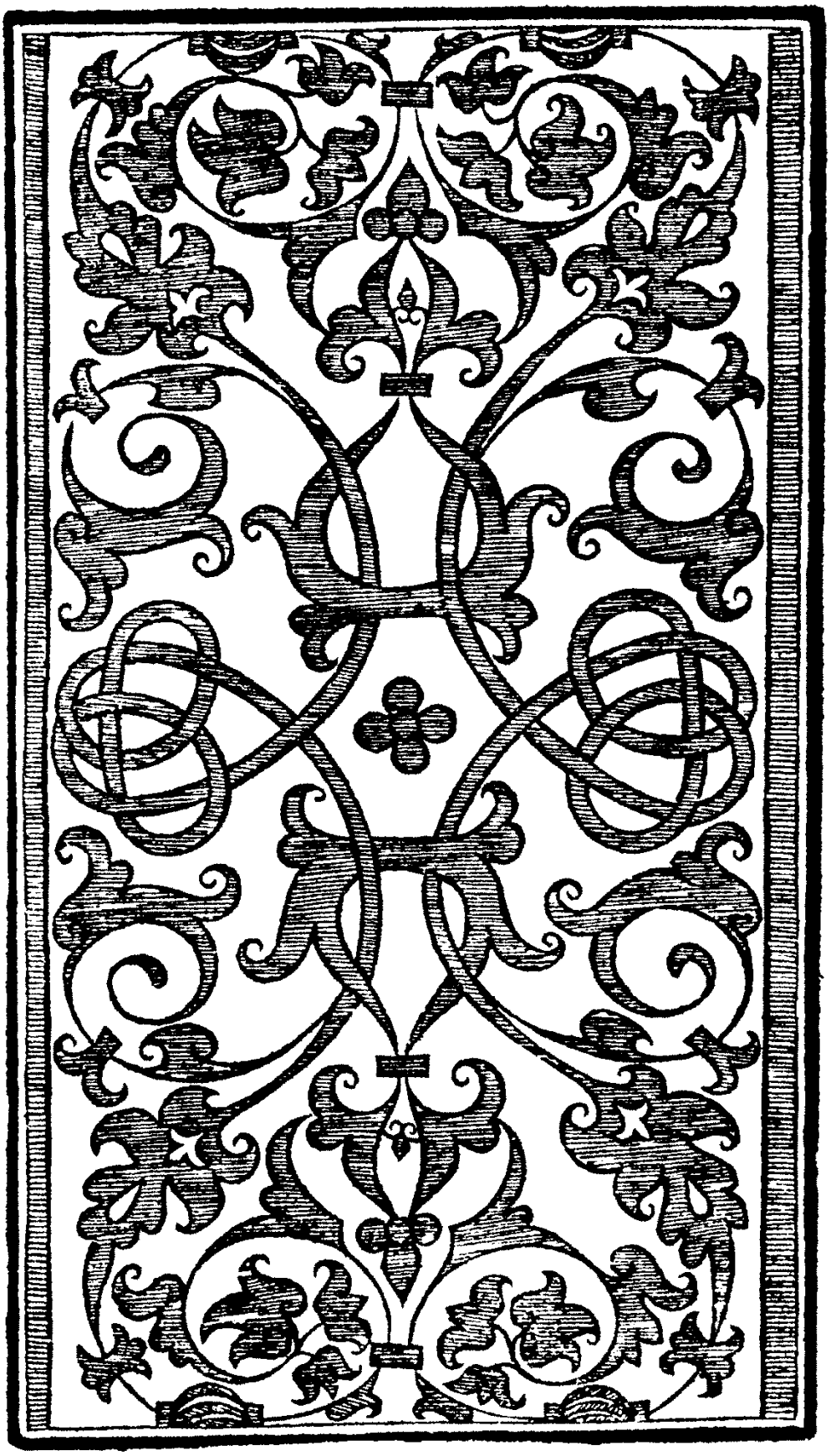


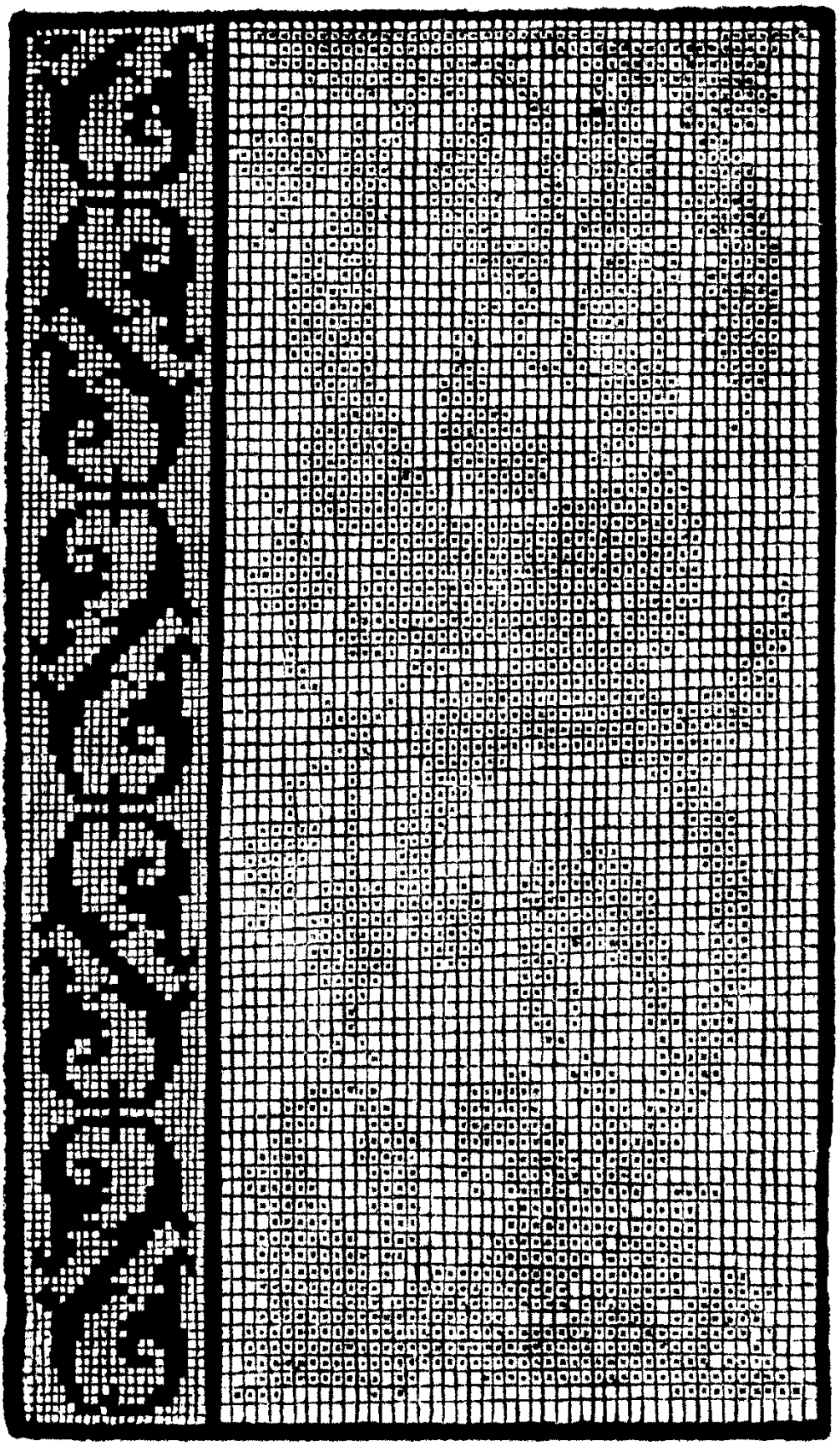


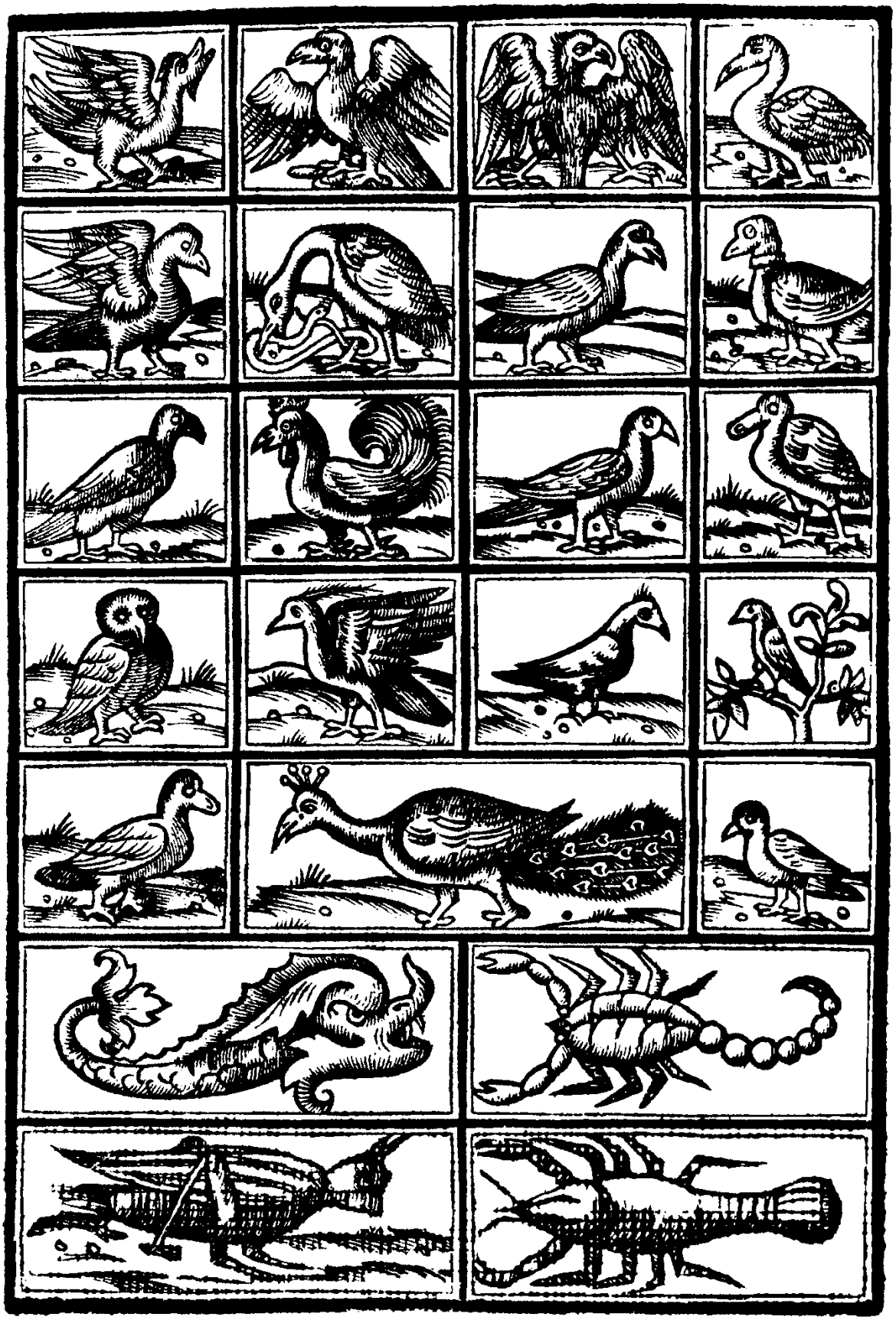


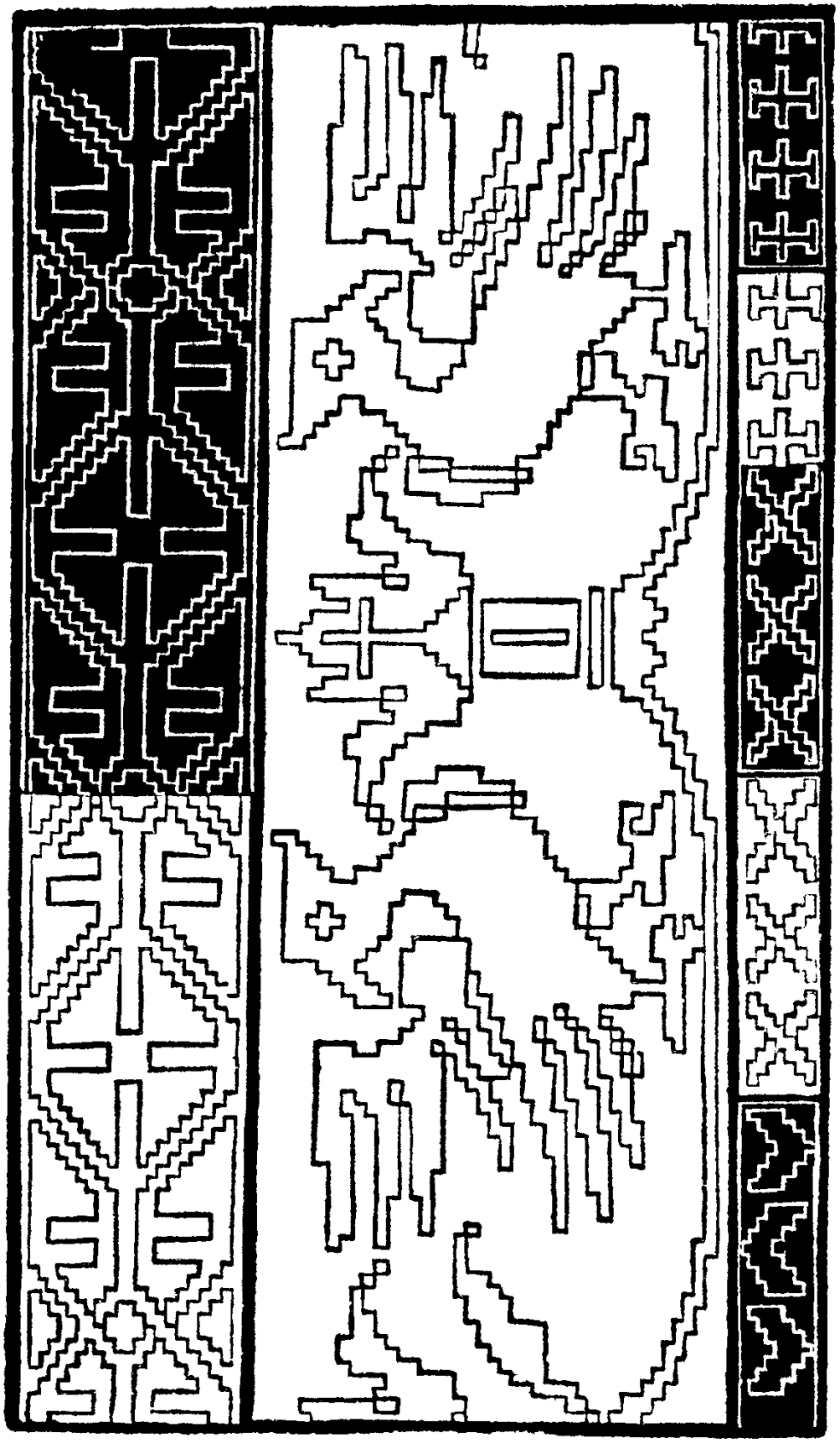


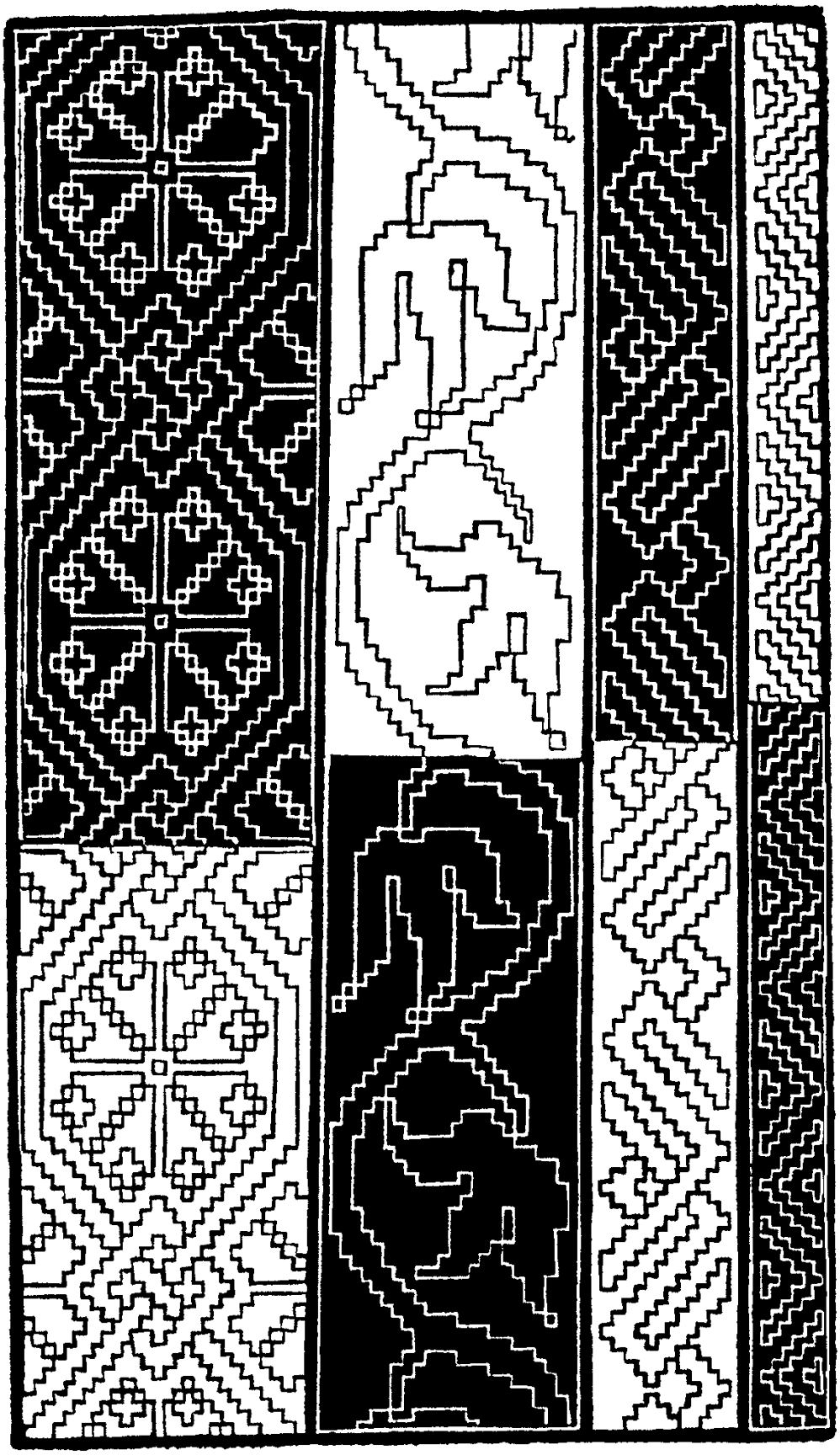


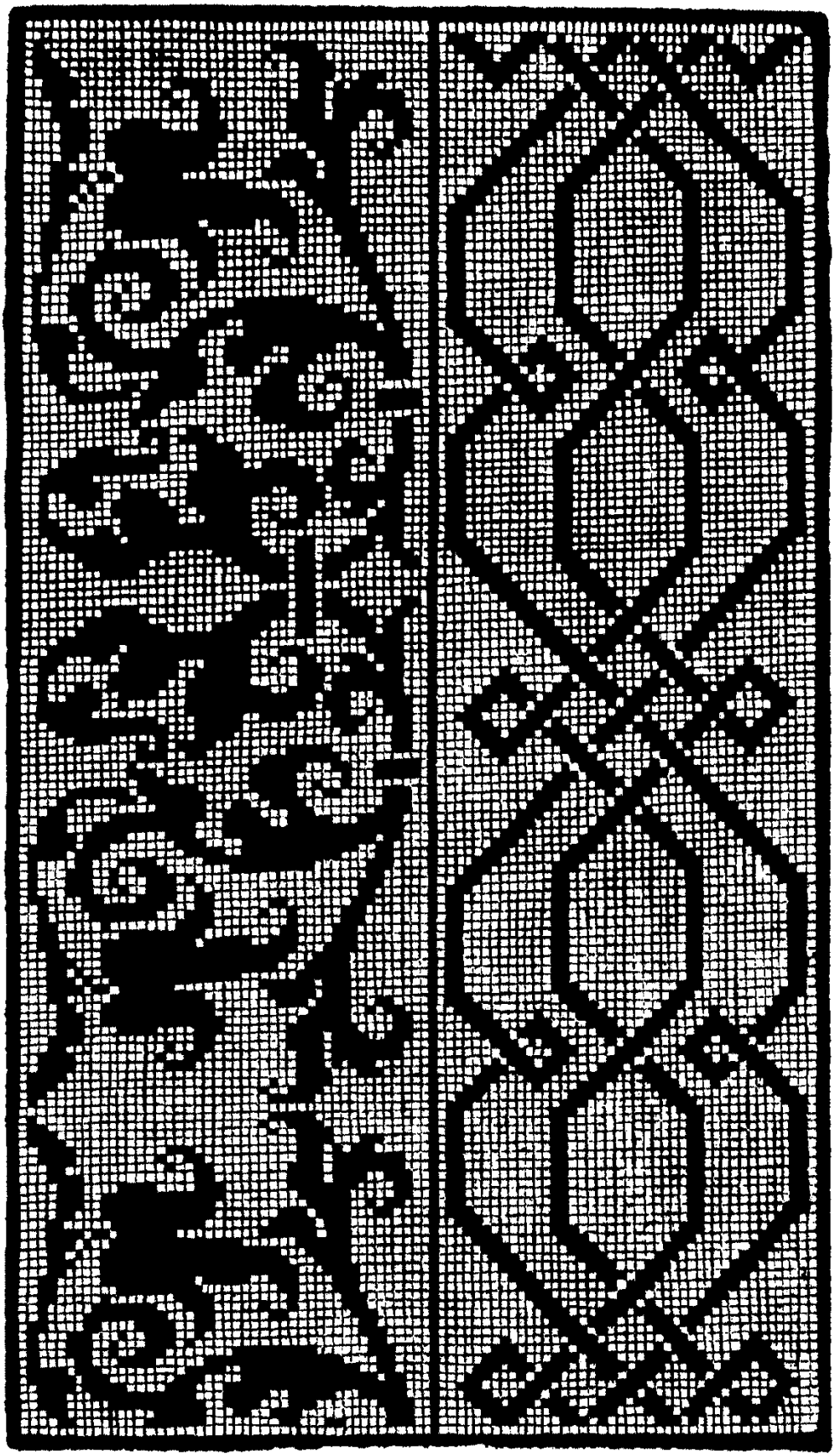


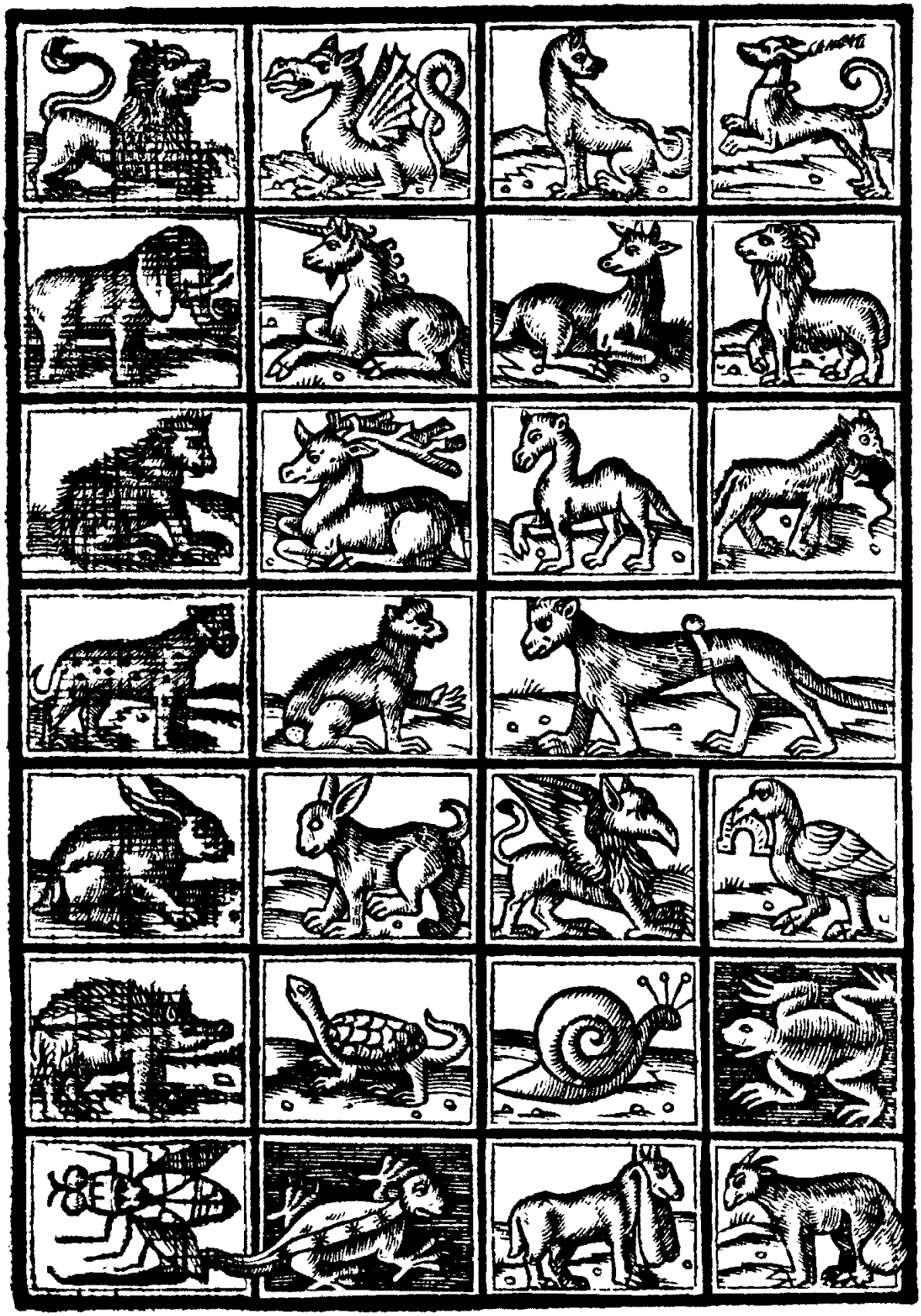


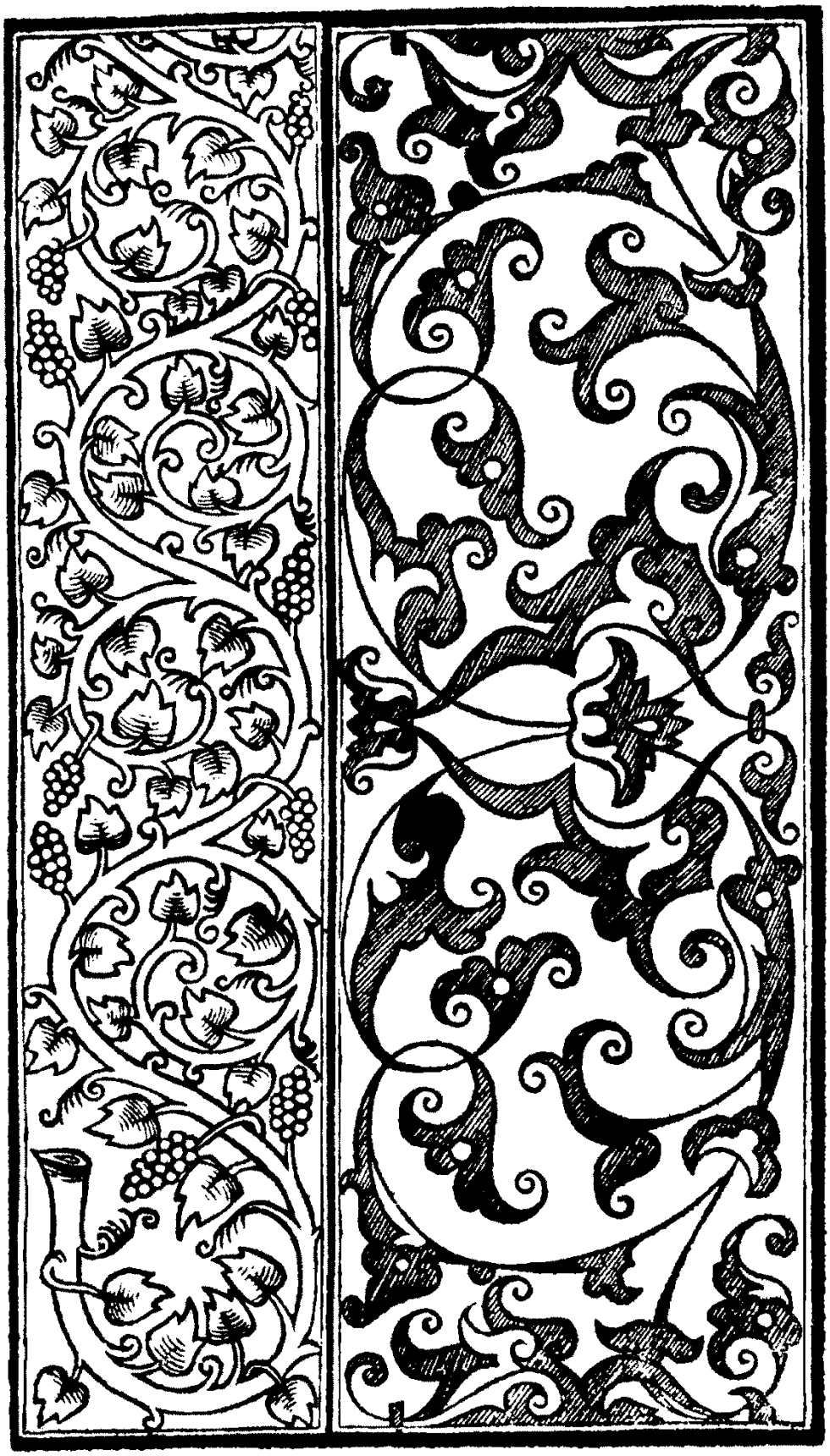


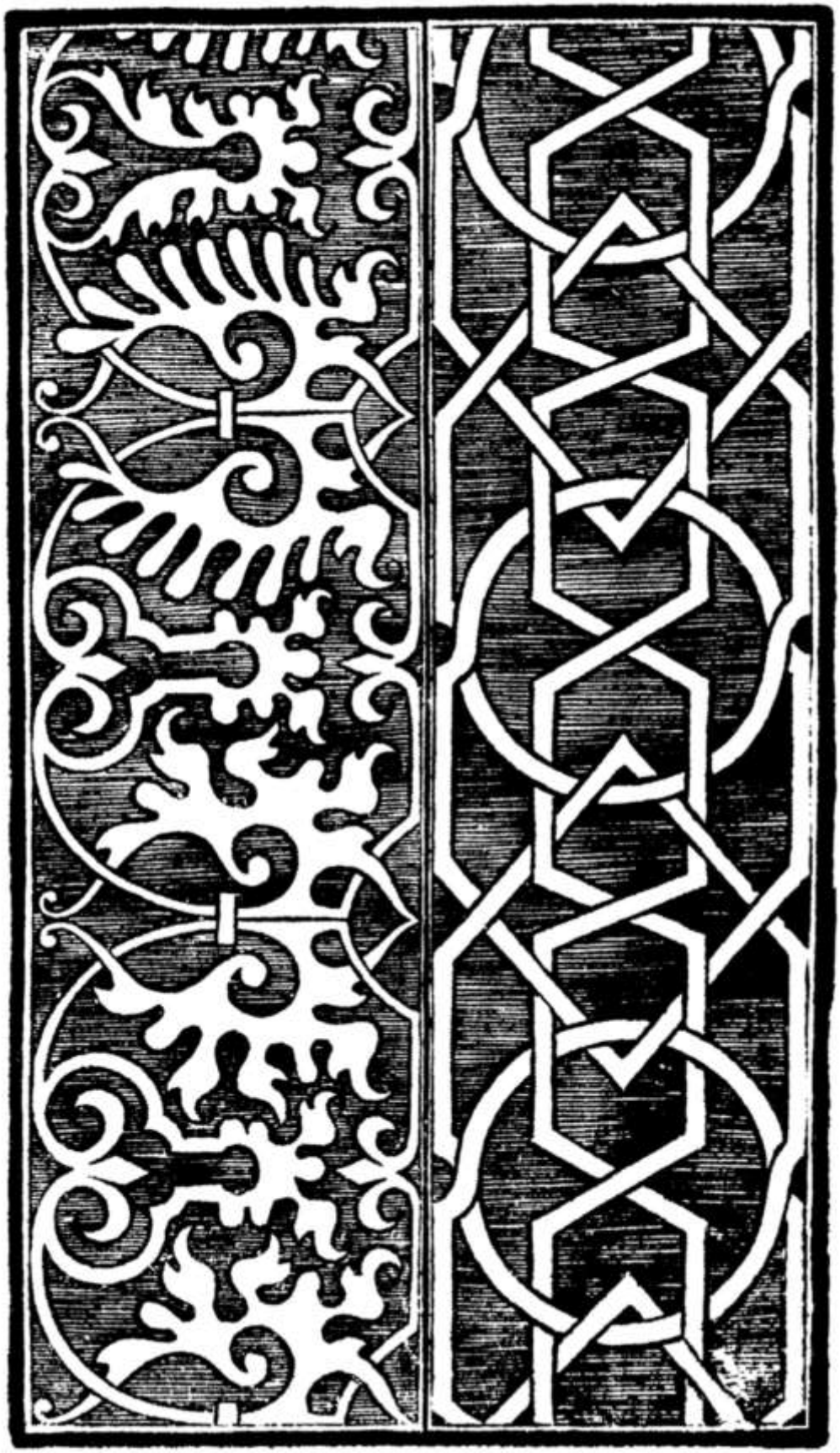


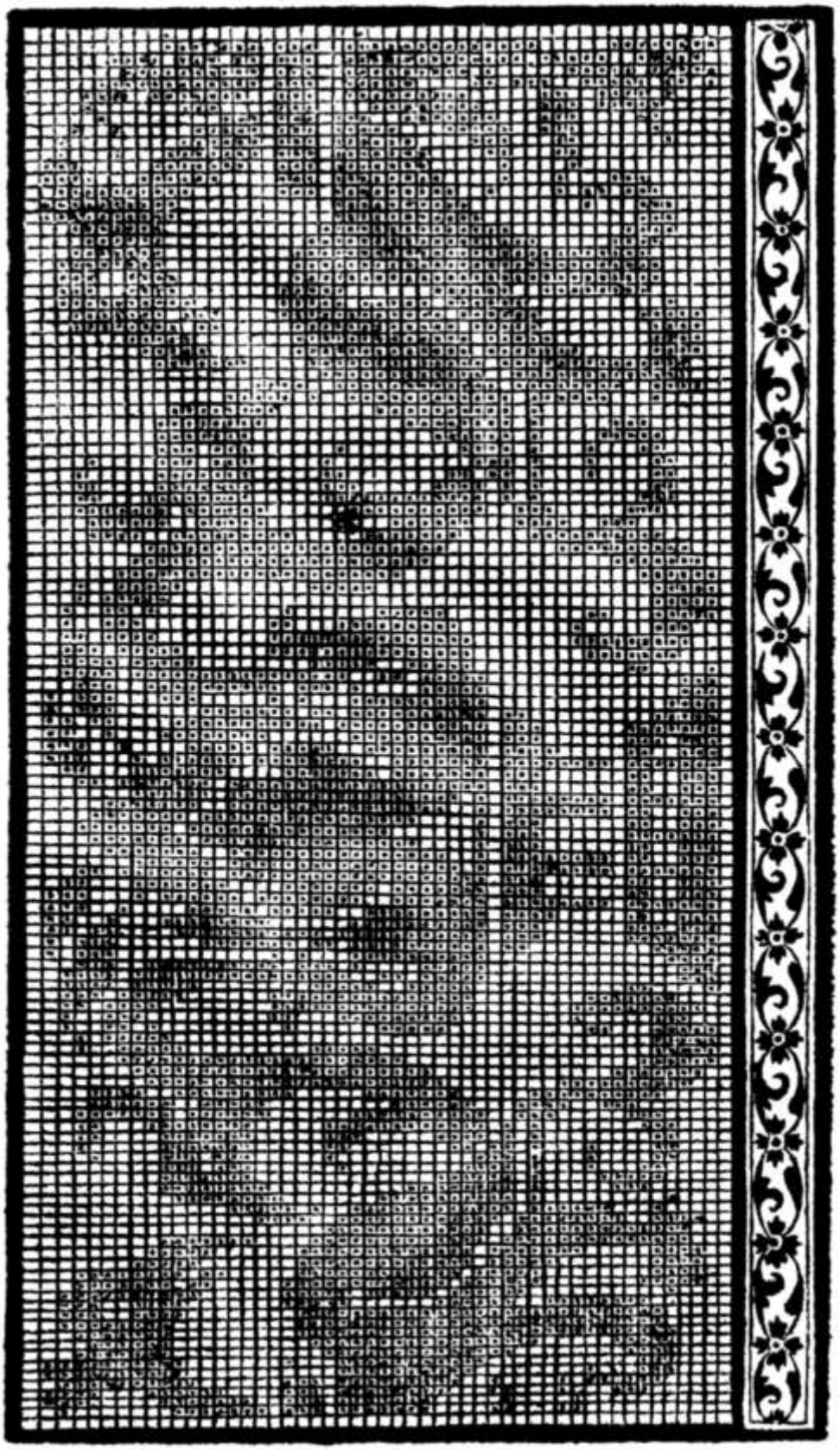


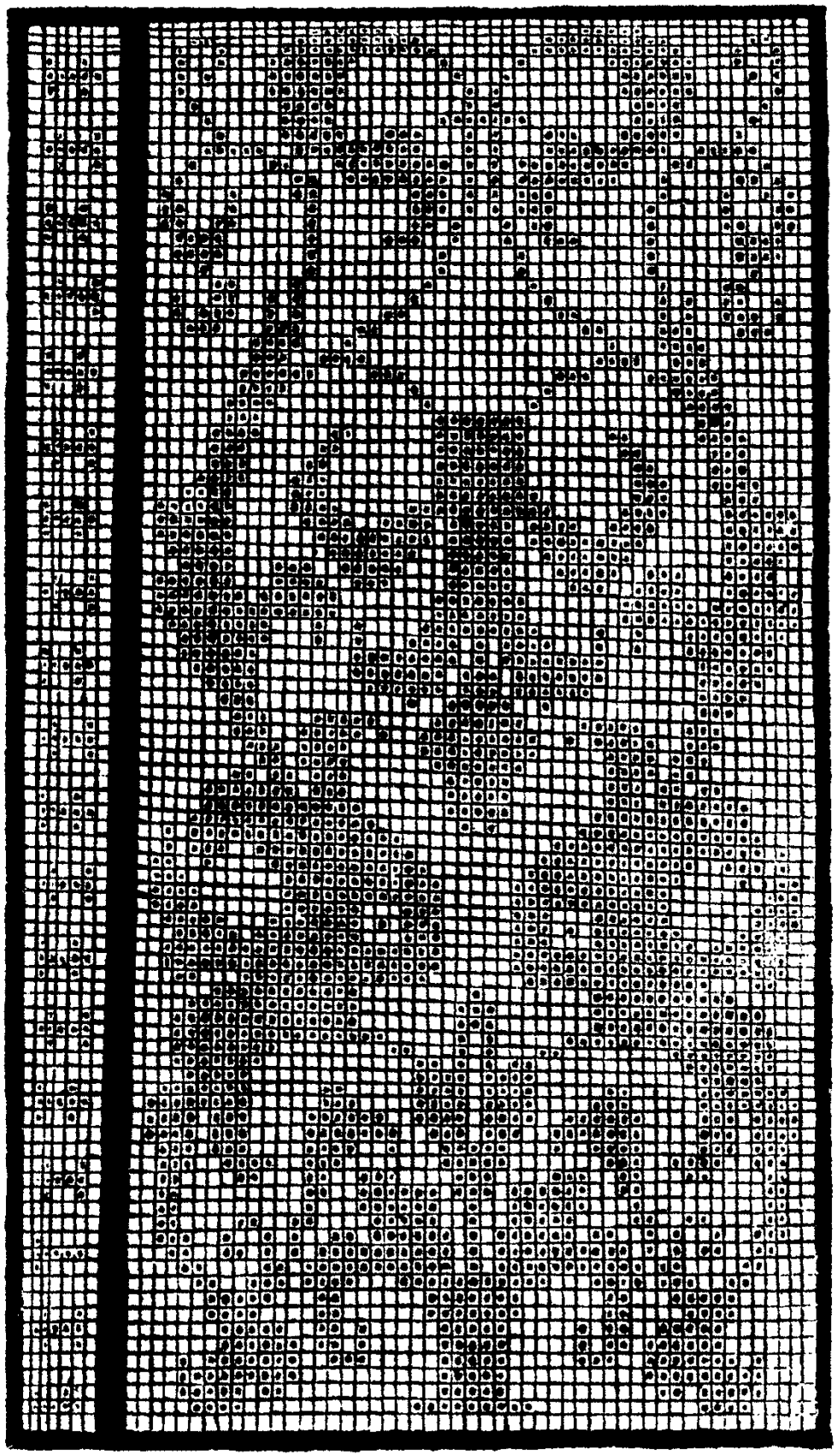


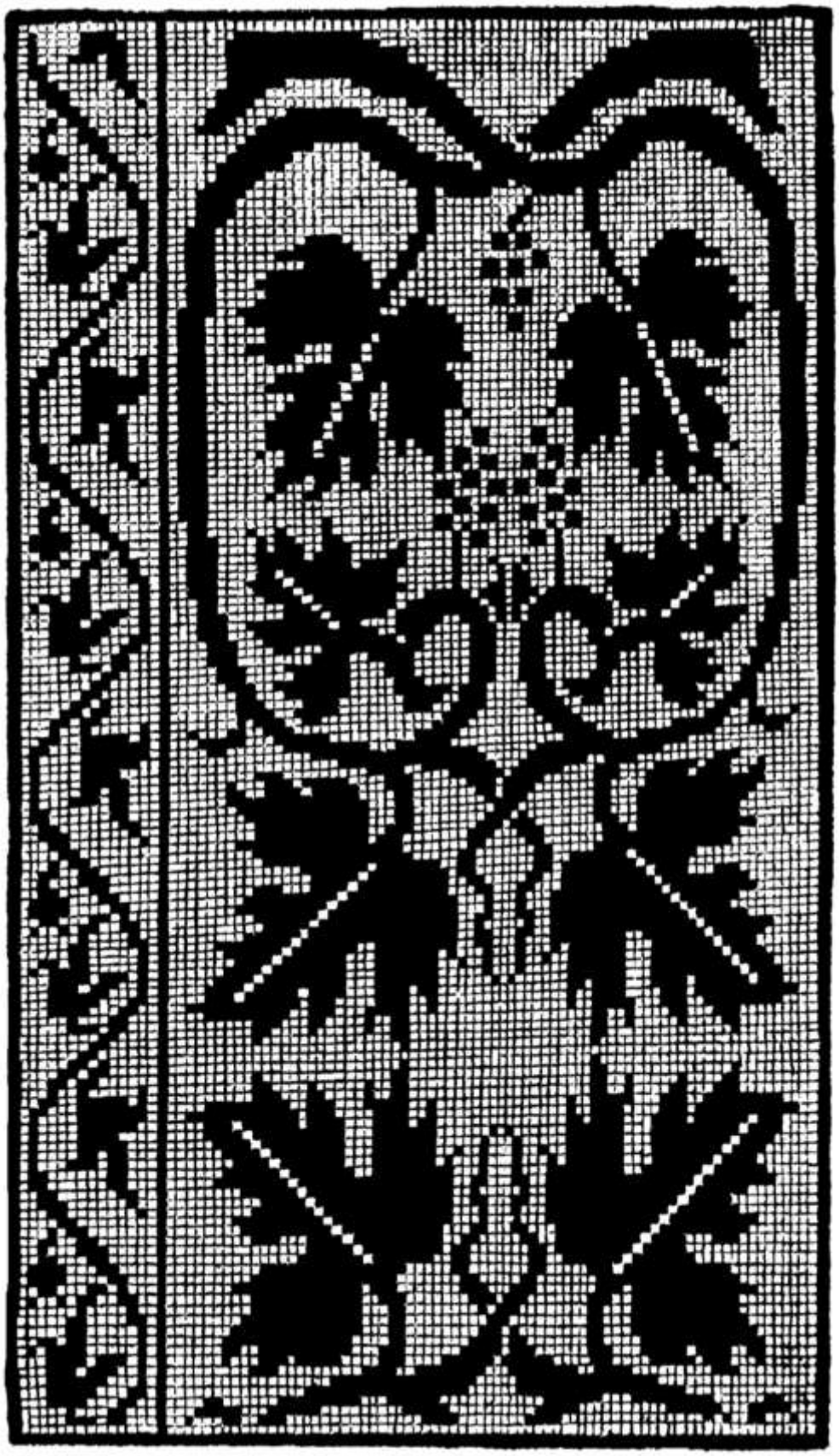


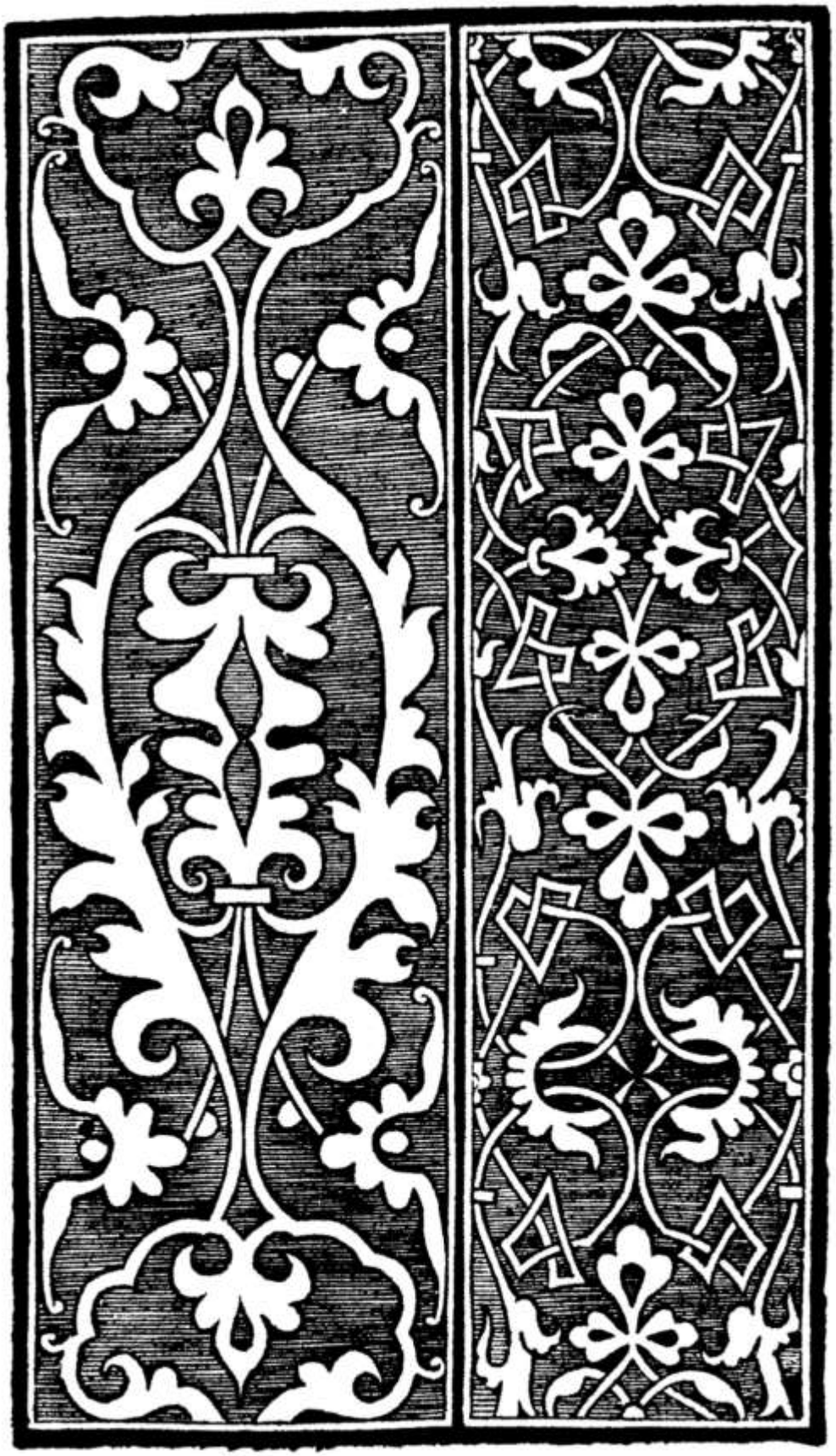


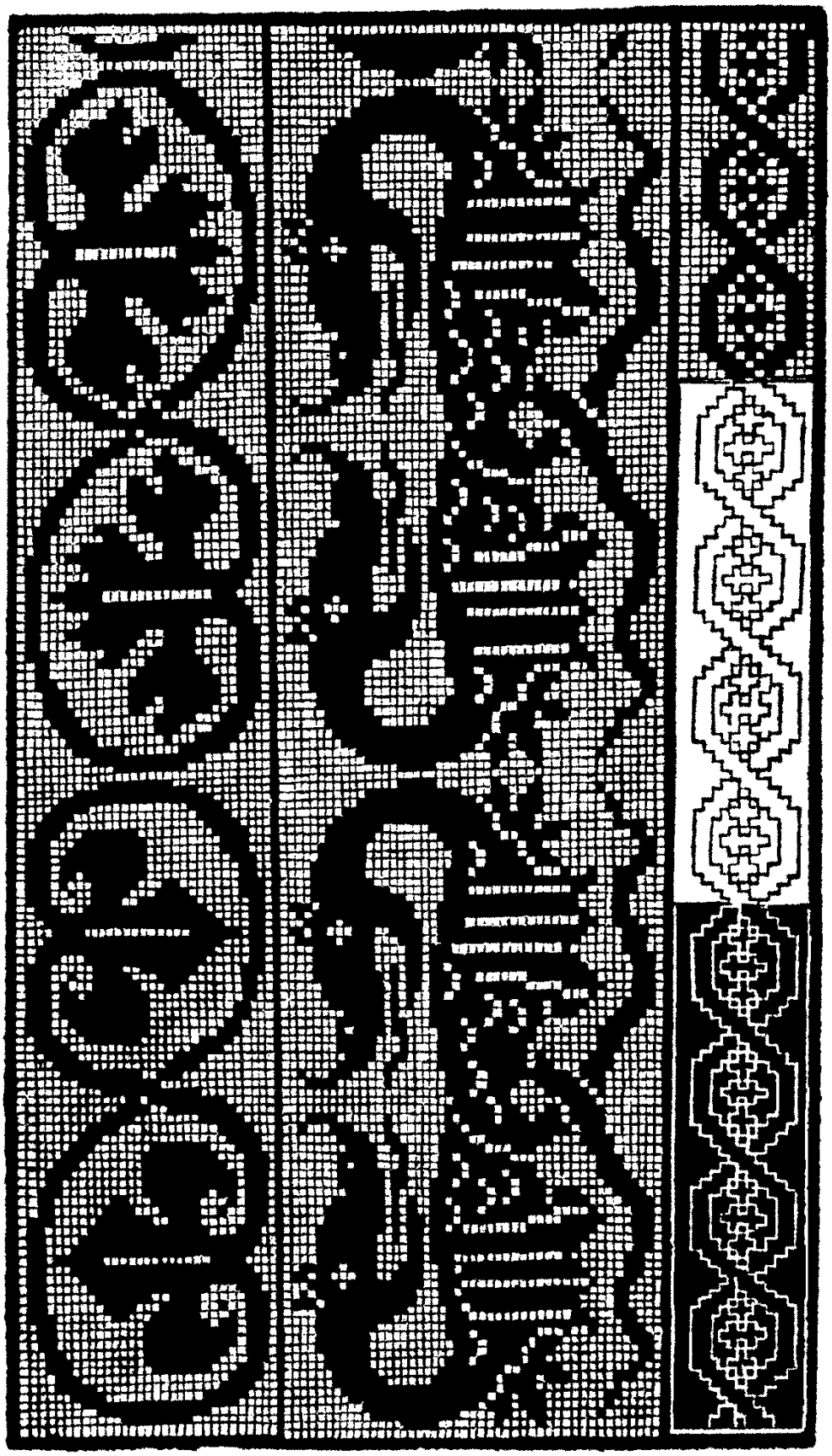


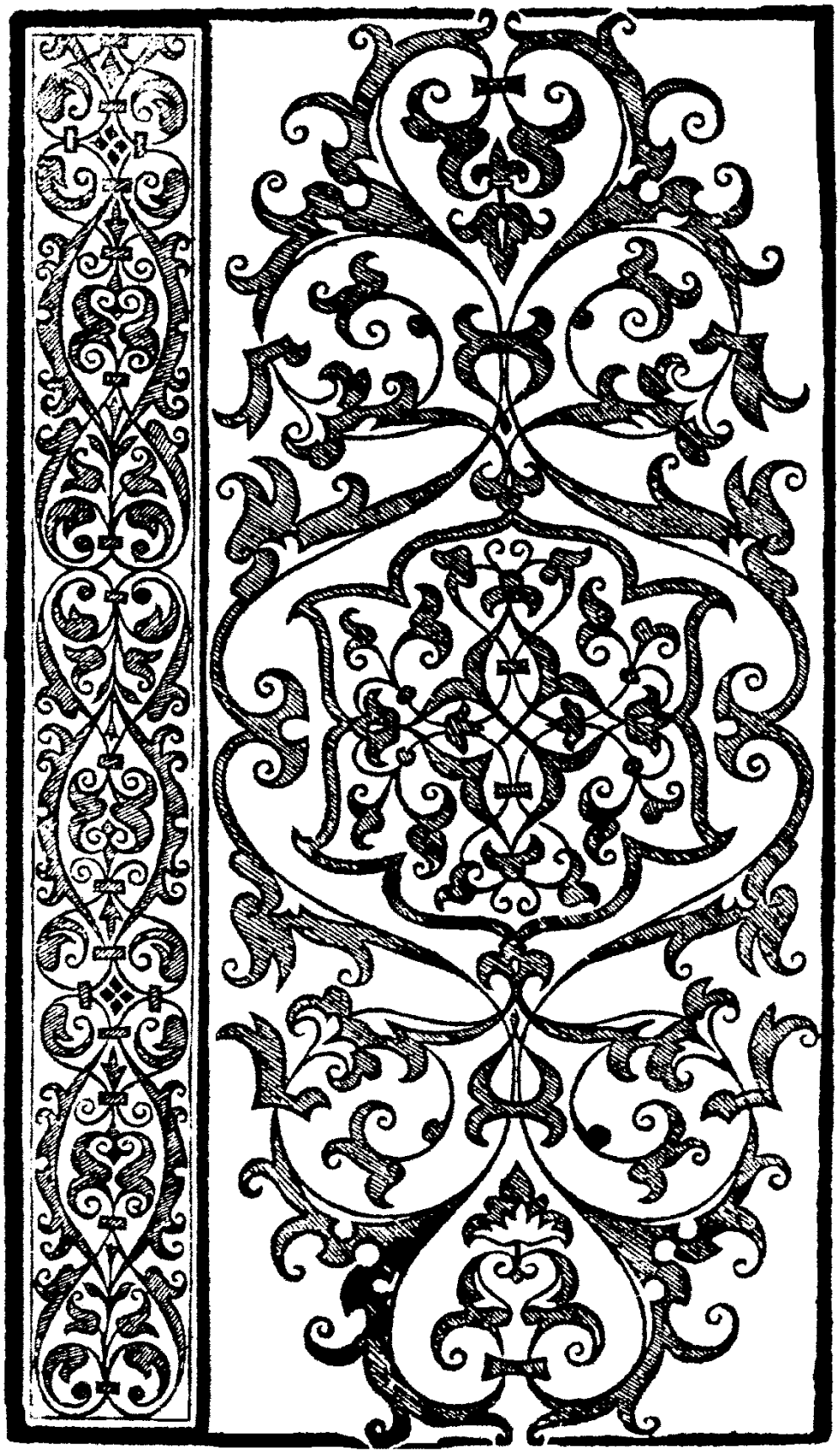


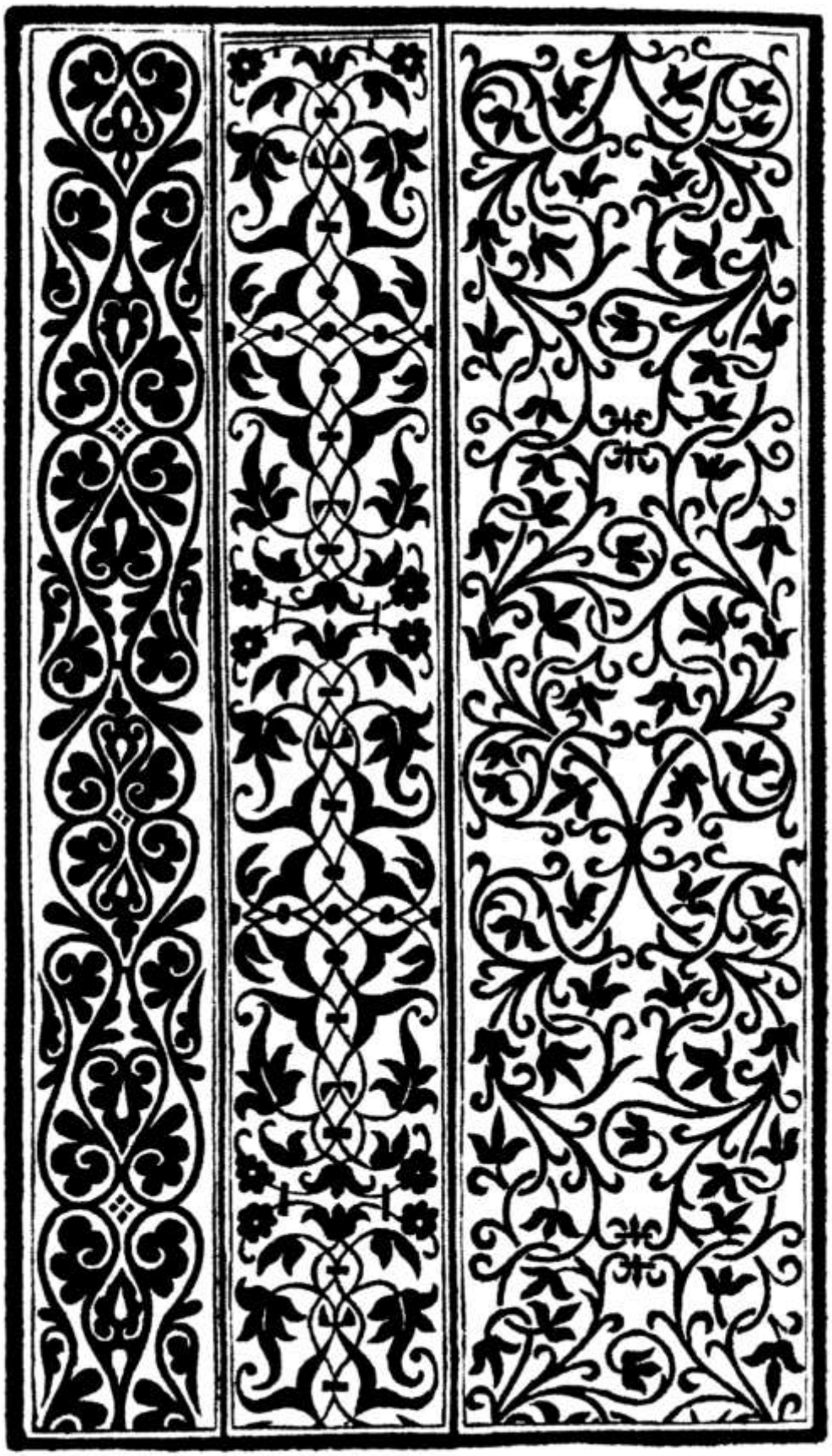


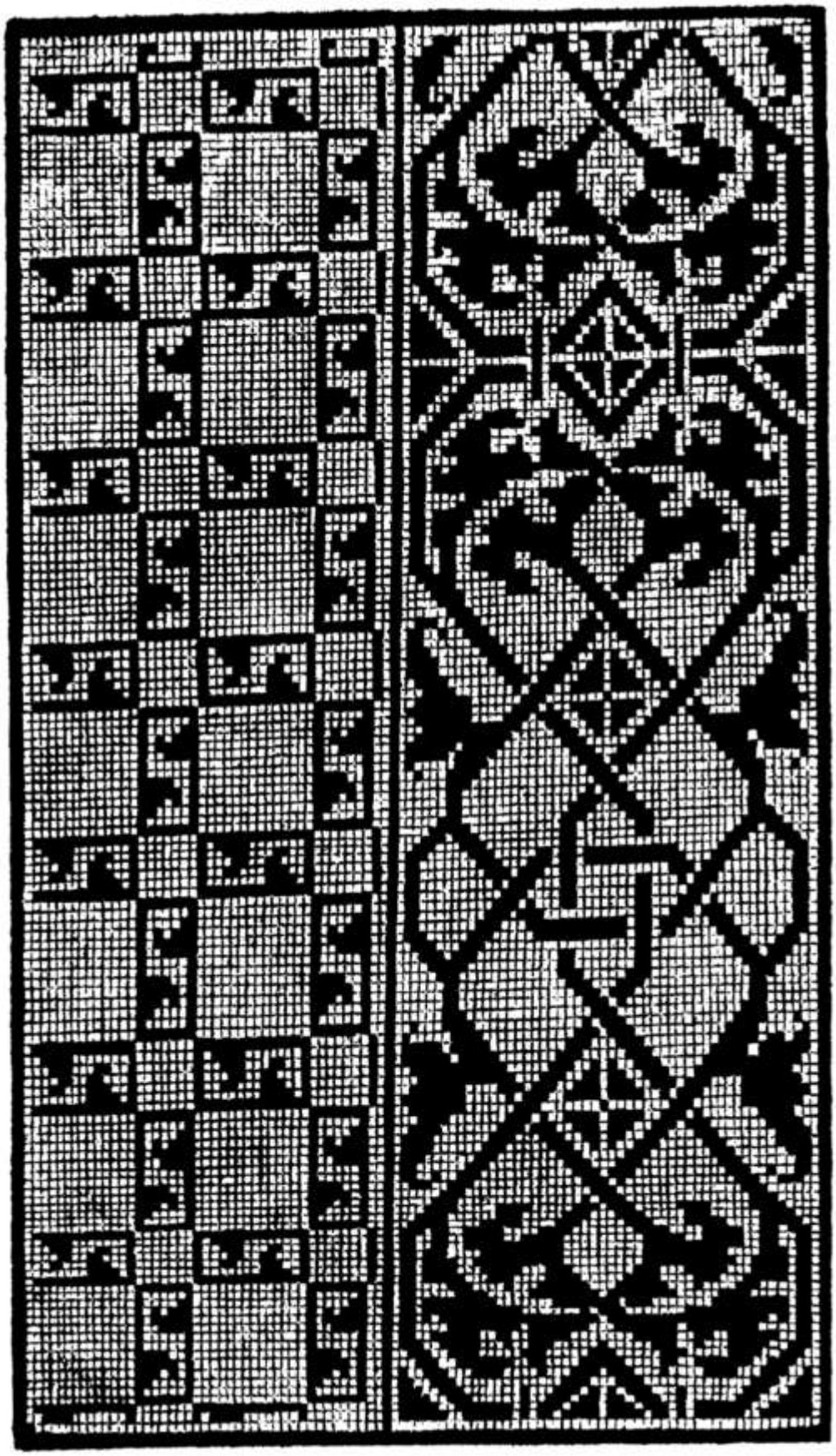


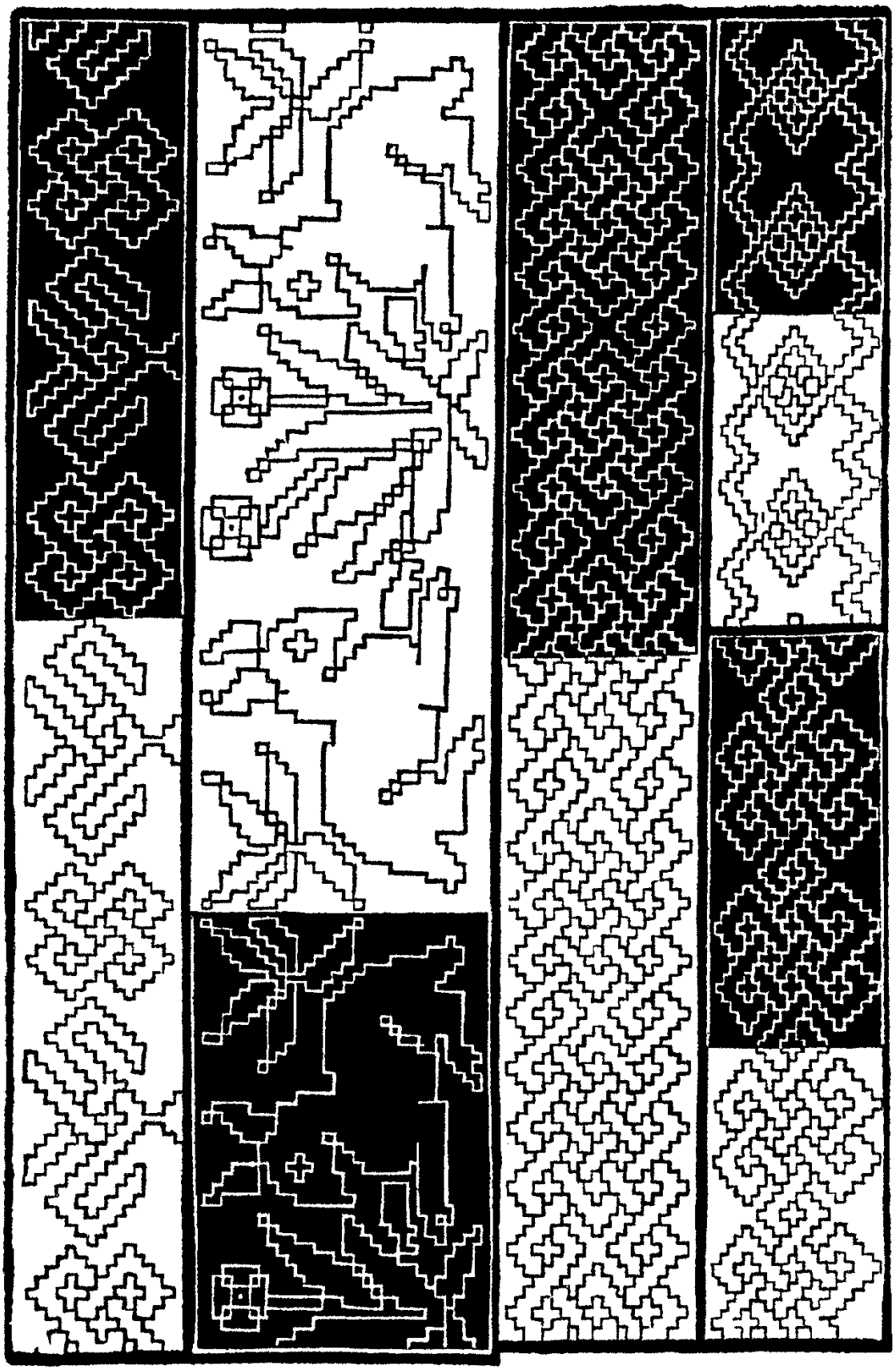


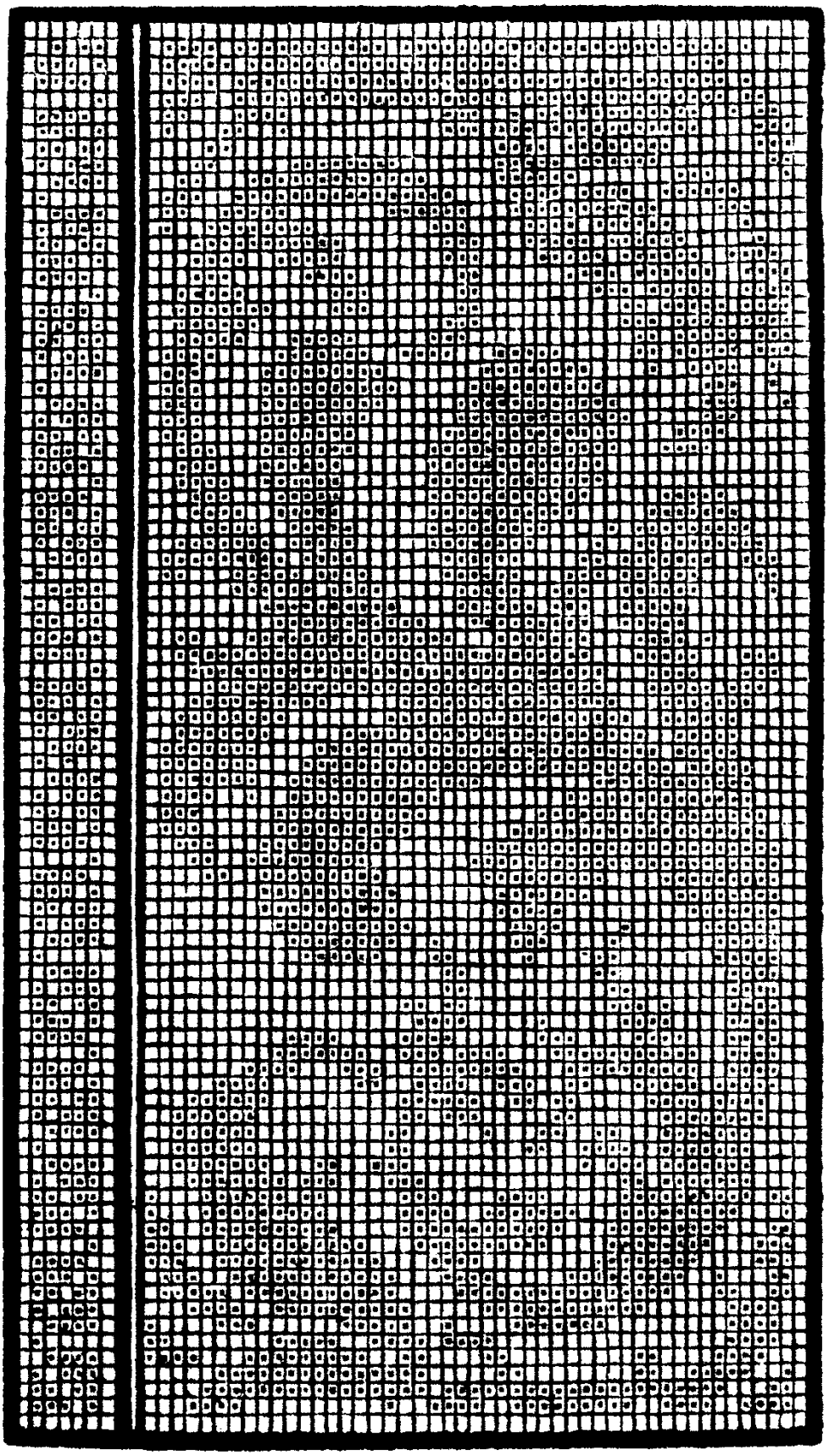












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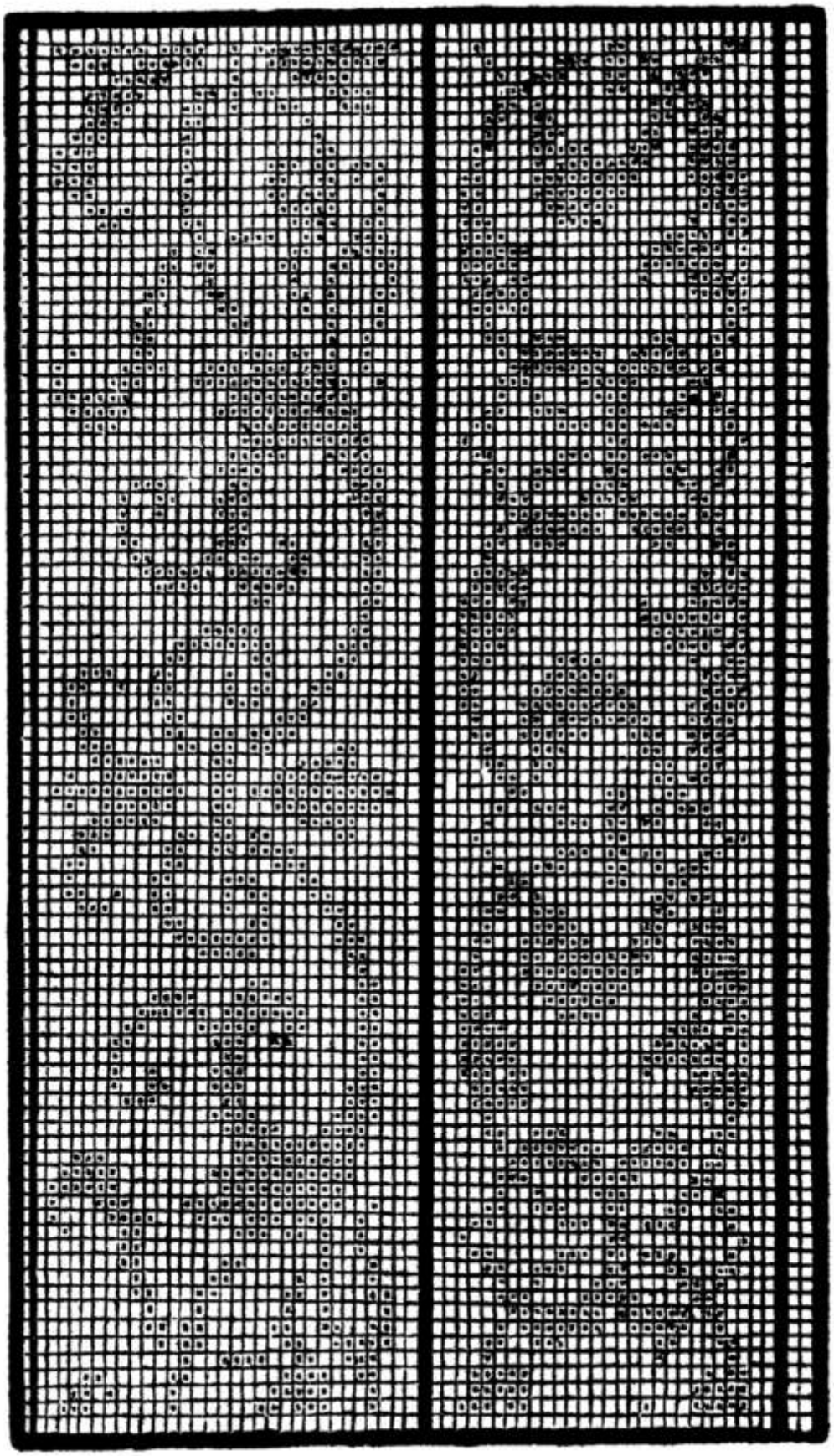

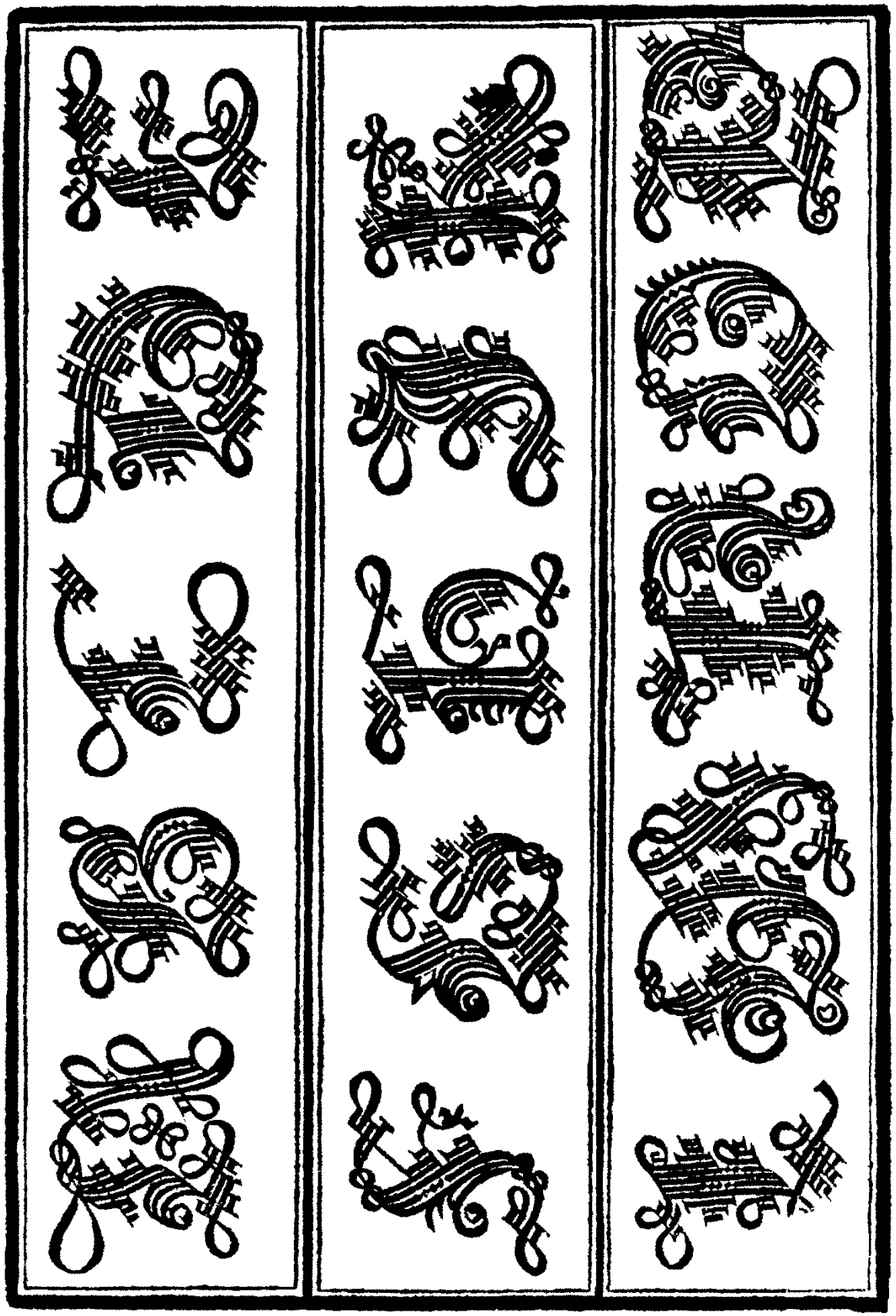

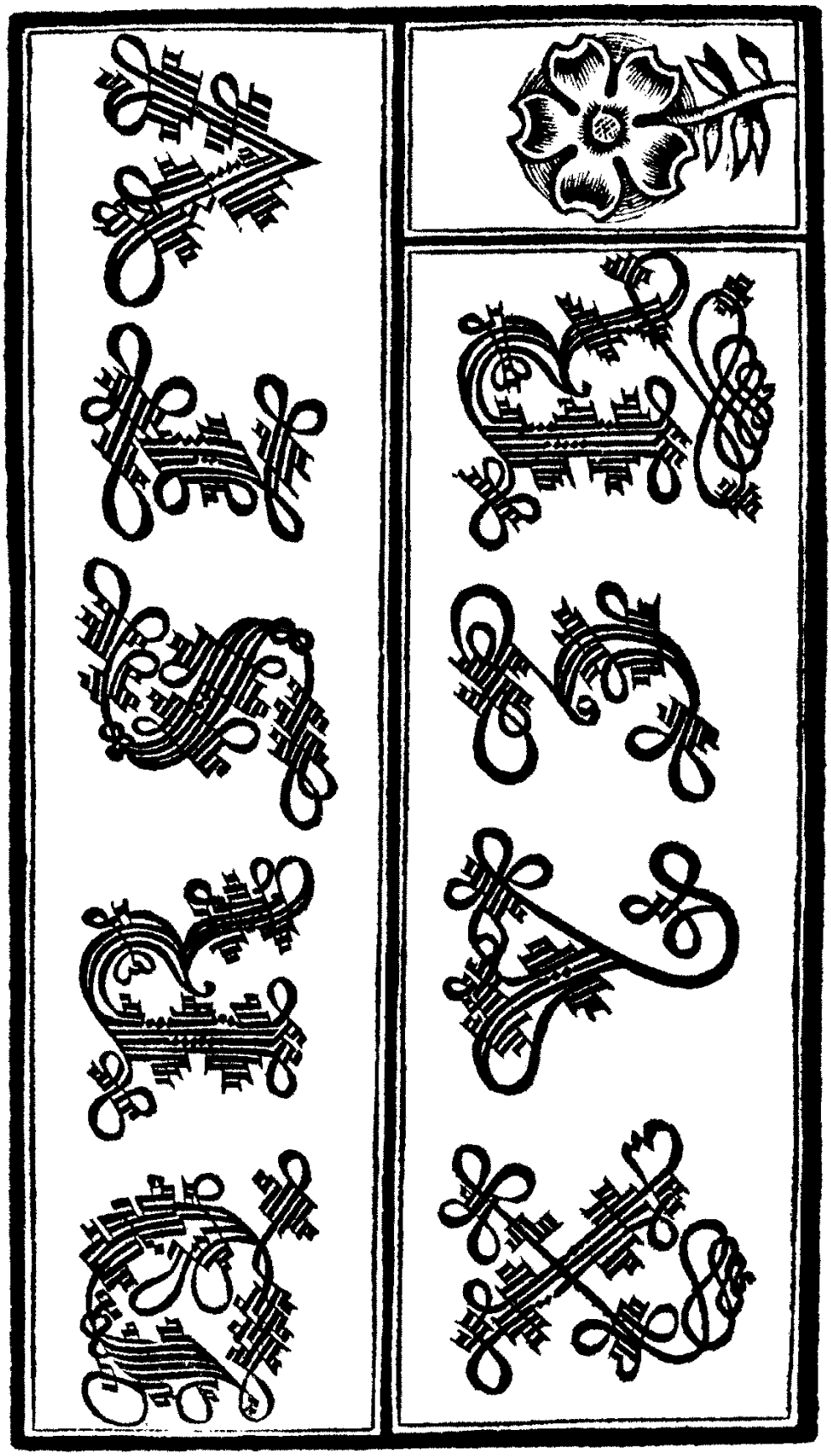

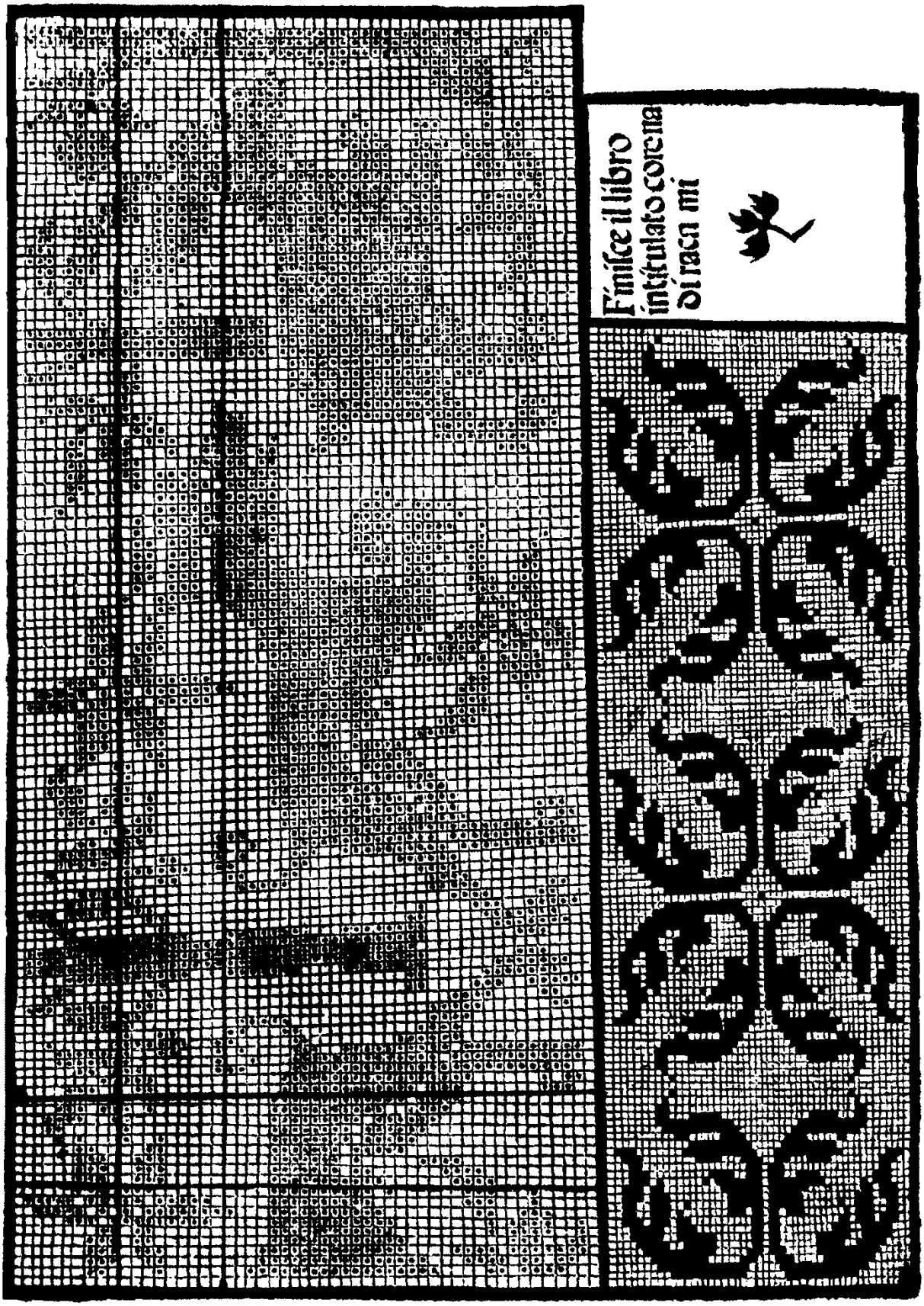
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